

RECIPE FOR REVIVAL
AND
OTHER SERMONS

By
JOHN STACY

Published by
J.C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS
Winona/Singapore/New Delhi

Art Work, India
Typesetting, Singapore
Offset Printing, U.S.A.

© Copyright by J.C. Choate Publications, 1985

Order From:
J.C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS
Route 2, Box 156
Winona, Mississippi 38967
Phone (601) 283-1192

INTRODUCTION

SOMEONE has written, “Preacher, to no other man on earth does God give such an awesome task as to you. You trade in eternal things. Yours is a calling that angels might envy. To you is given a power that hell fears above all other powers on earth. You are a divine delegate, a God-endued ambassador. Life and death are in your hands.

“I believe the Christ who cleansed the temple in the days of his flesh would, without question, cleanse the pulpit if he were here right now. Preacher, would he cleanse yours?”

Christ indeed would have to cleanse the pulpits that are filled with men, who are preaching everything but the pure, simple, unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ. We must fill our pulpits with men who declare, Christ said it, I believe it, that settles it!

John Stacy
December 10, 1985

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JOHN STACY was born February 5, 1942, in Columbus, Ohio. After graduating from high school in 1959, Mr. Stacy served in the Navy for three and a half years. During this time, he served as a Leadership Training Instructor.

He attended Pensacola Junior College, Freed-Hardeman College, A.A., Oklahoma Christian College, B.A., Harding Graduate School, Alabama Christian School of Religion, M.A., and the International Bible Institute and Seminary, M. Th., D. Min.

He has served churches of Christ in Key West and Homestead, Florida; and Dyer, Dyersburg, and Rutherford, Tennessee and Lake Station, Indiana.

Mr. Stacy has preached the gospel in eleven states; Trinidad, Grenada, Antigua, St. Kitts, and Grand Bahama in the West Indies; Germany in Europe; Ghana and Togo in Africa; India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, and Nepal in Asia.

John Stacy is the author of seven other books, *Sermons On The Ten Commandments*, *Exhort Brother!*, *Sermons on Heaven and Hell*, *Stacy's Sermons In Series*, *Citizens of Eternity*, *Messianic Psalms And Other Sermons*, and *Now Abideth These Three — Sermons On Faith, Hope, and Love*.

He is owner and operator of Stacy Publications and Book Service. He has recently published a book of sermon outlines entitled *Harvest Sermons* by Jim Huffman. He is a member of the Christian Booksellers Association.

He is married to the former Hilda Smith and has one son, John Troy II.

DEDICATION

THIS book is dedicated to the memory of my parents, John Troy and Eleanor Catherine Stacy.

MEMORY

MEMORY is a funny thing, it comes and goes like a bird on the wings, it brightens the heart like a song you might sing, or it brings pain like an old wound that has been opened again.

My parents have long since passed from the scene, yet their memory is more than a remnant of an ancient dream, for they are woven into the very fabric of my being.

I owe them a debt that I can never repay, but I can honor their memory by what I do and say, as I journey down life's uneven pathway, day by day.

John Stacy

THE PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

MAN goes on unceasingly, looking, searching, and trying to find solutions to his problems, answers to his questions, happiness for the present, and hope for the future. He looks to material things, experiments with drugs, tests the religions of the world, and a thousand other things, but still he does not find forgiveness for his sins, satisfaction in his attainments, contentment of mind at the close of day, and rest for his weary soul. What's wrong? With all of his intelligence, and accomplishments to his credit, surely he can do better than that. But he hasn't yet arrived, and doesn't know to his day how to solve this mystery.

Actually, man has been looking in the wrong place. Instead of looking down, inward, and outward, he needs to look upward to the one who made him, knows him, and can help him. How easy it would be to turn his life around if he would but do so. To do so would not mean that one is foolish, weak or stupid, but it would mean rather that one is wise and strong.

Bro. John Stacy has prepared a series of lessons that will help one to get back to God and his way of doing things. The material in this book is designed both for the Christian and the non-Christian. It is for you, the reader, and it is hoped that you will then in turn share it with your friends. The world needs so badly to be called back to God. This is man's hope; this is the world's hope.

Among those of us who are Christians and members of the body of Christ, we need to be awakened out of our sleep. We need to be revived and made aware anew of our calling and of our purpose for being here. What a blessing we can be to ourselves and to all of mankind if we will but accept the challenge the Lord has given us to take the gospel to every creature under heaven. The author of this book would call us back

to reality and to the responsibility and commitment that must be ours as the Lord's people. This is the answer to our problems, both for those who are members of the church and those who are not. When we do the work that the Lord has given us to do then we are going to be blessed and those who hear and obey the gospel that we proclaim will also be blessed. This, then, is the need of the hour.

J.C. Choate
Church of Christ
131 Moulmein Road
Singapore 1130
July 4, 1985

CONTENTS

Recipe for Revival	1
Messianic Names	8
Is Christ your Lord?	12
The Value of the Church-Kingdom	15
The Doctrine of the Judgment	18
Genesis or Evolution?	24
A Letter to Philadelphia	37
The Inspiration of the Old Testament	61
Revelations about Revelation	84
The Fruits of the Spirit	115
Methods of Evangelism	137
Does God Exist?	143
The Greatness of the Restoration Movement	148
Life in Three Tenses	156
The Importance of One	161
The Jerusalem Church	165
The Antioch Church	172
The Church in Rome	176
The Church in Colossae	183
The Saints at Philippi	186
The Church in Thessalonica	189

RECIPE FOR REVIVAL

INTRODUCTION

1. The church of Christ desperately needs a revival. We need revival because many of our churches are as far from pure, simple, primitive, New Testament Christianity as the Pope is from marriage! We must get back to the church of Christ that we find in Acts of the Apostles. There we find the church of the Lord, before it became fat and out of breath from too much prosperity. Frankly, one of the reasons that we have had no revival in the church is that we are content to live without it! Someone has offered this recipe for revival.

If all the SLEEPING folk will wake up,
And all the LUKEWARM FOLK will FIRE UP,
And all the DISHONEST folk will confess up,
And all the DISGRUNTLED folk will sweeten up,
And all the DISCOURAGED folk will cheer up,
And all the DEPRESSED folk will look up,
And all the ESTRANGED folk will make up,
And all the GOSSIPERS will shut up,
And all the DELIQUENTS will pay up,
And all the DRY BONES will shake up,
And all the MEMBERS will study up,
And all the PREACHERS will speak up,
And all the TRUE SOLDIERS will stand up,
THEN THERE WILL BE A GREAT REVIVAL!

2. I'd like to offer you my own recipe for revival.

I. We must Reach All We Can

- A. Jesus told us to preach to the gospel to the entire world.

1. Mt. 28:28-20
2. Mt. 16:15-16
3. Lk. 24:47
4. Acts. 1:8

5. Like Paul we are debtors to God and the lost. (Rom. 1:14, I Cor. 9:16).
- B. We must reach the world as fast as we can. Paul said that we are to preach the word with urgency. (II Tim. 4:2) The urgency can be seen in the fact that untold millions are dying untold. Furthermore, there is now an unprecedented tidal wave of covenant breaking, God defying, soul defying, soul destroying iniquity, sweeping across the ocean of human affairs.
- C. Some years ago I read of a lawsuit. A doctor passed the scene of an accident and did not stop to help. The victim died. The court ruled in favor of the family. It held that the doctor had knowledge and did not use it to save human life.
- D. We as Christians possess knowledge. We too are responsible for a lost and dying world. Some years ago in Africa, a man asked a missionary to come to his village and tell them about Jesus. The missionary said that he was already booked up and could not come. The African said, if you don't come and tell our people about Jesus, I'll tell your God on you! How many lost souls will point their fingers at us on the day of judgment? How many will cry out and say that we never once made an effort to reach them, even though we had the knowledge?
- E. We must reach out or pass out. We must evangelize or fossilize. We must stop meeting, eating, and discussing. We must pray, fast and evangelize. (Acts 13:1-3) Away with flashbulb evangelism! It is here to today and gone before we know it. Away with gimmicks. Let's preach the gospel again! It takes a long time to grow an oak. It takes time to root sin out of the lives of the lost too. If we don't become missionaries, we will become a mission field ourselves!

II. We Must Teach All We Reach

- A. In Mt. 28:19 Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" Some translations say, "Go ye therefore

and make disciples of all the nations”

- B. Who are we to teach? All nations, that is, those who are lost among all ethnic groups, even those in the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts 1:8).
- C. We are certainly to teach the new disciples. In fact that last part of verse nineteen says, “.... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded thee.” We are then to teach them to “keep on observing” all things Jesus has ordained us to know and to do.
- D. It is God’s will that all shall be taught of God. (Jno. 6:45).
- E. When the word of God increases, disciples multiply. (Acts 6:7).
- F. Jesus taught daily and so did the early Christians. (Mt. 26:55, Acts 5:42).
- G. Paul taught publically and from house to house. (Acts 20:20).
- H. The Antioch church was full of teachers. They are even named in Acts 13:1. Paul and Barnabas were among them.
- I. It is God’s will that teachers be a part of the organization of the church. (Eph. 4:11).
- J. In the last several years I have travelled around the world on more than one occasion. I have taught and preached the gospel in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean. I have noticed that denominational churches utilize schools. The Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans, and Presbyterians use them to great advantage in Africa and the Caribbean. In Grenada we met a full time radio worker for the Baptist church. The Baptists had three stations in Antigua! In Asia I saw the Asian headquarters for the Seventh Day Adventists. They have a large printing ministry there in Singapore. Communism has printed two pieces of their literature for every man woman and child on the earth in an effort to teach communism. What are we doing? Whatever it is, it is a drop in the bucket compared to what denomi-

nationalism and communism is doing.

III. We Must Train Those That We Win

- A. Jesus trained the twelve Apostles for three years.
- B. Judas and Silas who were prophets spent some time confirming the brethren. (Acts 15:32).
- C. Paul and Barnabas decided to go back and retrace their first missionary journey. They were interested in these babes in Christ. They wanted to know how they were doing. (Acts 15:36) Verse forty-one says that they confirmed those in the churches of Syria and Cilicia.
- D. Luke tells us that the churches were established in the faith. (Acts 16:5).

IV. We Must Enlist Those We Train

- A. Idleness has always been a curse. David and Bathsheba illustrate this well. (II Sam. 11).
- B. The unemployment rate in America at this time is 8%. We believe that it is too high. The government has created programs to stimulate the economy and hopefully produce more jobs. Those of us who preach would rejoice evermore if the unemployment rate in the church was only 8%! Even that would be too high of course. But it would be unlike anything we have ever known. Christians are to be doers of the word and not hearers only. If we are not, we will delude ourselves. (Jas. 1:22).
- C. We must get them involved in the worship of God. (Jno. 4:24).
- D. We must get them involved in the work of the church.
 - 1. Each joint supplies something to the body. (Eph. 4:16).
 - 2. We were created for good works. (Eph. 2:10).
 - 3. Christians are co-workers with God. (I Cor. 3:9).

V. We must Pray If There Is To Be A Revival

- A. The Apostles said that they needed to give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. (Acts 6:4).

- B. Victories will not be won in the pulpit by firing intellectual bullets and wisecracks.
- C. Rather victories are won in the prayer closet. There is sense in which the battle is won or lost before the preacher's foot ever reaches the pulpit. The preacher who is not praying is playing! Christians who are not praying are straying. Have you ever noticed the most churches are always worried about money? What the modern day church worries about most, the early church worried about least. Our emphasis is on paying and theirs was on praying!
- D. When it comes to the matter of New Testament, Spirit inspired, hell shaking, world breaking prayer, never has so much been left to so few!
- E. Jesus said that we were to pray always. (Lk. 18:1) The early church continued steadfastly in prayers. (Acts 2:42) We need to pray, Wilt thou not revive thy work in the midst of the years? (Heb. 3:2) Psalms 85:6 asks, wilt thou not revive us again? We need to pray that prayer in the worst possible way.

VI. We Must Give All The Glory To God If There Is To Be A Revival

- A. Speaking to the Jews Jesus said, "I receive not honor from men." (Jno. 5:41). In verse forty-four Christ asks, "How can ye believe, which receive honor of one another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"
- B. Paul asked, "Who then is Paul and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed I planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase." (I Cor. 3:5-6). Man has nothing to glory about, except the cross. (Gal. 6:14).
- C. Count the top television evangelists. Look at all the big tops under the tent of evangelism. Look at the preachers who not only have a nice home but a cottage on the lake. They also have a boat and a big bank account to go with it. With such extortioners and

unjust men, we begin to understand why there is no revival. They preach the Jesus of the stable but live in mansions and hotels. To satisfy their lusts, they bleed the brethren financially. It is all done in the name of sweet Jesus who had to borrow a penny to illustrate a sermon. Poor old God, he doesn't get much glory anymore. O God, lift us out of this unspiritual rut and from this ungodly rot! Father help us to glorify you and your Son in all that we do or say. Smite us with a thunderbolt of divine wrath, if we dare rob you of the glory that you so richly deserve. In Jesus name we ask it. Amen!

VII. We Need Some Soul Hot Preaching If There Is To Be Revival

- A. Jeremiah had a holy fire burning in heart and bones. He could contain the preaching of the word of God no longer. (Jer. 20:9).
- B. Paul kept back nothing that was profitable in preaching the gospel. (Acts 20:20). As a result, he was pure from the blood of all men. (Acts 20:26). He refused to shun his God given responsibility to preach the whole counsel of God. Paul in describing his preaching wrote, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (I Cor. 9:16).
- C. O brethren, where are the Jeremiahs and Pauls in the church today? Where are the pulpits that are ablaze with men who are on fire for God? Give us O God men who will ransack Asia Minor, march into the market-places, stir the synagogues, penetrate the palaces like Paul. Paul and other preachers went out with the war cry of the gospel in their hearts and on their lips. They altered Asia, jaundiced the Jews, riled the Romans, taught teachers, and pitied prison jailers.
- D. Away with this palsied, powerless preaching, unmoving, born in the tomb and not the womb preaching! We are disgusted with the preaching that is nourished in prayerless souls. We can preach and perish. We

cannot pray and perish. (Acts. 6:4).

- E. Preachers make pulpits famous, prophets make prisons famous. Lord send us prophets, terrible men, who will cry aloud and spare not. Men too hot to hold, too hard to be heard, too merciless to spare. We do not need men in soft raiment, with softer speech, men who open their mouths and feed us spiritual pablum!

In conclusion let us observe that in this hour we need burning hearts, bursting lips, and briming eyes. If we were one tenth as spiritual as we think we are, our streets would be filled on Sundays with vast throngs of believers, who are marching to Zion with sack cloths on their bodies and ashes on their heads. They would be shaking at the calamity that has brought the church to be the unlovely unnerved, unproductive things she has become.

The moon of revival has not yet risen on this hell bound, Christ rejecting, speeding to judgment generation. What are we doing about it? We are not just sitting at ease in Zion, we have gone past that, we are sleeping in Zion!

May we pray, Lord send us a revival and let it begin with me.

MESSIANIC NAMES

INTRODUCTION

1. Isaiah has more to say about Christ than any New Testament book. Isaiah is often called the fifth gospel. He had much to say about the character, life, and death of Christ.
2. Our text comes from the fifth gospel — Isa. 9:7.
3. Our text ascribes to Jesus five names. A good name is important to an individual and the church. The name we have has a lot to say about our character.
4. The names in our text have a lot to say about the character and nature of Jesus.
5. The names in our text provide us then with insight into Jesus that we would do well to consider.

I. Wonderful

- A. Hebrew word “pab” means, “to separate, distinguish, amaze through miracles, full of wonders or wonderful.”
- B. Truly the miracles of Jesus evoke wonder, awe, and amazement.
- C. The pre-existence of Christ was wonderful.
 1. Jno. 1:1-3
 2. Jno. 8:59
 3. I Cor. 10:4
- D. The virgin birth of Christ is wonderful.
 1. It was foretold Isa. 9:6
 2. The place Mic. 5:2
 3. The nature Isa. 7:14
 4. The purpose Mt. 1:21
 5. The meaning Heb. 7:25, I Tim. 2:5
- E. The life of Jesus should evoke wonder and awe.
 1. Christ’s life was startling Isa. 52:15
 2. Christ’s life was astonishing Mt. 7:28
 3. Christ’s life was authoritative Mt. 5:27
 4. Christ’s life was disturbing Mt. 10:34-49

5. Christ's life was demanding Luke 9:23
6. Christ's life was irresistible Jno. 12:32, I Pet. 2:22
- F. The death and resurrection of Christ are two of the most amazing facts of human history.
 1. Gen. 3:15
 2. Rom. 5:8-9
 3. II Cor. 5:21
 4. Acts 2:24
 5. I Cor. 15:20
 6. Jno. 5:28-29
 7. Rev. 1:17-18
 8. I Pet. 1:3
- G. The second coming of Jesus will be wonderful.
 1. Mt. 24:36
 2. Mt. 24:44
 3. I Cor. 15:24-26
 4. II Pet. 3:9-11
 5. Thess. 4:16
 6. Rev. 22:20

II. Counsellor

- A. Hebrew word "yoetz" means, "honorable rank and wisdom, one who stands and advises, a counselor, an intercessor, one who pleads for another."
- B. Oh, how we need an advisor! Many people turn to psychology, fortune tellers, gurus, Ann Landers, etc.
 1. Jeremiah 10:23
 2. Proverbs 3:5, 14:12
 3. Mt. 15:14
 4. We must listen to Jesus, Mt. 3:17, 17:5.
 5. Consider the consequences of failing to listen to Jesus.
 - a. Mt. 7:24-27
 - b. John 5:24
 - c. Mark 7:14
 - d. Jno. 12:48
 - e. Acts 3:22-23
 - f. Rev. 3:20

C. Let us thank God for Jesus our intercessor, who will plea our case before God.

1. Isa 53:12
2. Lk. 23:34
3. Heb. 7:25
4. I Jno. 2:1
5. Jno. 17:20
6. Luke 22:31
7. Rom. 8:34
8. Lk. 23:42-43

III. Mighty God

A. The Hebrew word, “elgibbor” means, “powerful, divinity, strong God, hero God, omnipotent, invincible God.”

B. Our God has demonstrated his power.

1. In creation Jno. 1:1-3, 14
2. In history — Dan. 4:25
3. In the salvation of mankind — Heb. 7:25, Rom. 1:16, I Cor. 1:24
4. In overcoming death — Rev. 1:17-18, I Cor. 15:25
5. In overcoming satan — I Jno. 3:18, Rev. 20:1

C. Like God’s men of old, let us say our God is able!

1. Dan. 3:18
2. Dan. 6:20
3. Rom. 8:31
4. Eph. 3:20
5. Phil. 4:13
6. Rev. 1:8

IV. Everlasting Father

A. The Hebrew word “abi ad” means, “Father of eternity, possessor and controller of eternity, and provider in eternity.”

B. Jesus can and will control our eternity.

1. Heb. 5:8-9
2. II Cor. 5:10

3. Mt. 25:34, 41, 46
4. Rev. 20:12-15
- C. Certainly our Lord can and will provide for us in eternity. Rev. 7:14-17.

V. Price Of Peace

- A. The Hebrew word "sar shalom" means, "the author, originator, or source of peace, spiritual satisfaction, happiness, well-being, prosperity, and safety."
- B. Jesus is the source of real peace.
 1. Jno. 16:33
 2. Rom. 5:1
 3. Eph. 2:14
 4. Col. 1:20
 5. Col. 3:15
 6. II Thess. 3:16
- C. The peace of Jesus satisfies and makes us happy. Jno. 14:27.

CONCLUSION

1. Surely the birth, life, and death, and resurrection of Christ are the most wonderful events in human history.
2. Won't you let these events move you to seek the counsel of Jesus. Won't you let Christ beg and plea your case before the father?
3. Why not let the power of Christ save your soul?
4. Why not let him control your eternal destiny? He wants to meet your needs for all eternity.
5. Do you know the peace of Christ which passes all understanding?

IS CHRIST YOUR LORD?

INTRODUCTION

1. Many call him Lord-but he is not! Luke 6:46.
2. God the Father made him Lord. Acts 2:36.
3. Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth. Matthew 28:18, Acts 2:36.
4. We must confess Jesus as Lord — if we are to be saved. Romans 10:9.
5. Is Christ your Lord?
6. The Greek word for Lord is “Kurios” and it can be defined in four different ways.

I. The Word Lord Denotes Ownership

- A. Does Christ own you?
- B. Or do you say, “It is my body and soul, I’ll do what I want with them?”
- C. If we are Christians, Christ owns us.
 1. I Corinthians 6:19-20
 2. II Tim. 2:19
 3. Titus 2:14
 4. I Peter 2:9
- D. Christ owns the Christians because he bought us with his blood.
 1. Eph. 1:7
 2. I Peter 1:18-19
- E. Have you been bought with the blood of Christ?
- F. The answer is no! If you as a penitent believer have not confessed your faith in Christ and been baptized, Christ is not your redeemer.
 1. Romans 19:17
 2. Hebrews 11:16
 3. Acts 17:30-31
 4. Romans 10:9-10
 5. I Peter 3:21, Hebrews 9:14
 6. Acts 22:16, Revelation 1:5

7. Mark 16:16, I Peter 3:21
G. Is Christ your Lord?

II. The Word Lord Denotes The Idea Of A Master

- A. We must choose our master. Matthew 6:24.
- B. Christ is to be our only master. Matthew 23:10.
- C. Christians are slaves! Slavery is a term that men do not like! For when we think of slavery, we think of prisons, chains, leg-irons, beatings, etc.
 - 1. Jesus was our slave! Matthew 20:28, Phil. 2:7.
 - 2. Christians must follow Christ's example. Mt. 10:24-25.
- D. Slaves lived to carry out their masters will.
 - 1. Jesus is our example. Luke 22:42.
 - 2. Christians must follow Christ's example. Matthew 7:21, Luke 6:46.
- E. Slaves owned no property.
 - 1. Jesus is our example. Luke 9:58, II Cor. 8:9.
 - 2. Christians must follow Christ's example.
 - 3. All we have belongs to God.
 - a. Psalms 24:1
 - b. Hag. 2:8
 - c. I Tim. 6:8-19
- F. The unique thing about Christian slavery is that we are never mistreated. We are granted freedom to obey or not to obey! Christians have a wonderful master and gladly live to do his will.
- G. Is Christ your Lord?

III. The Word Lord Can Refer To A King

- A. Jesus is king of kings!
 - 1. I Tim. 1:17
 - 2. I Tim. 6:15
 - 3. Revelation 17:14
- B. If Christ is our Lord, we must be in his kingdom — the Church.
 - 1. The Church and the kingdom are synonymous.
 - a. Matthew 16:18-19

- b. Col. 1:13
- 2. We enter the kingdom through the new birth. John 3:3-5
- 3. As citizens of the kingdom, we must obey the decrees of our king.
 - a. Matthew 7:21
 - b. Luke 6:46
 - c. John 14:15, 21, 23
 - d. Col. 3:23
- C. Is Christ your Lord?

IV. The Word Lord Denotes Reverence, Fear, And Respect

- A. The Gentiles did not fear God. Rom. 3:18.
- B. Christians fear God.
 - 1. We walk in fear and the church grows. Acts 9:31.
 - 2. Fear motivates us to save ourselves. Phil. 2:12.
 - 3. Fear motivates us to save others. II Cor. 5:17, I Pet. 3:15.
 - 4. Fear motivates us to be holy. II Cor. 7:1.
 - 5. Fear will cause us to worship God. Rev. 19:5.
- C. Solomon summed it all up in Ecc. 12:13.
- D. Is Christ your Lord?

CONCLUSION

- 1. Does Christ own you?
- 2. Is Christ your master?
- 3. Is Christ your king?
- 4. Is your relationship with Christ characterized by reverence?
- 5. Is Christ your Lord?
- 6. If we do not acknowledge Christ now, we shall in the future. Phil. 2:9-11.

THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH-KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

1. The terms church and kingdom are synonymous. Col. 1:13, Matthew 16:18-19.
2. Today we are told to preach Christ and leave the church out. Youth cries out, Jesus, yes, and the church, no. We are told that the church is a second rate institution that Jesus established in the place of the kingdom which the Jews rejected.
3. Biblical preachers certainly did not leave the kingdom out of their preaching!
 - a. John the Baptist. Matthew 3:2.
 - b. Jesus. Matthew 4:17, 23, Matthew 6:10, Acts 1:3.
 - c. Philip Acts 8:5, 12.
 - d. Paul Acts 28:30-31.
4. Let us now look at several verses that teach us the incalculable value of the church-kingdom.

I. Consider Jesus' Estimate Of The Church-Kingdom

- A. Jesus showed the greatest possible love for the church.
 1. He laid down his life. Jno. 15:13.
 2. He gave himself up for it. Eph. 5:25.
 3. He purchased the church with his blood. Acts 20:28.
 4. He is Saviour of the body — Church. Eph. 1:22-23, Eph. 5:23.
- B. We must keep on seeking first the kingdom of God. Mt. 6:33.
- C. Jesus said the kingdom of God is a treasure or a pearl of great price, that we must be willing to sacrifice all for! Mt. 13:44-46
- D. Jesus sanctifies and cleanses the church. Eph. 5:26.
- E. Jesus will present the church to himself. Eph. 5:29.
- F. Jesus nourishes and cherishes the church. Eph. 5:29.
- G. The church is the bride of Christ. Eph 5:23-31.
- H. Christ will return for his bride — The church-

Kingdom. I Cor. 15:24.

II. The Disciples Estimate Of The Church-Kingdom

- A. Matthew 24:12 says the gospel of the kingdom must be preached to the world before the end.
- B. Luke teaches us that the saved is the church and the church is the saved. Acts 2:47.
- C. Philip in preaching Christ, preached the kingdom. Acts 8:5, 12.
- D. Paul even in prison preached the kingdom of God. Acts 2:23, 31.
- E. Paul also taught:
 - 1. The Church makes known the wisdom of God. Eph. 3:10-11.
 - 2. The Church is the pillar and ground of truth. I Tim. 3:15.
 - 3. WE must do nothing to cause the Church to stumble. I Cor. 10:31-32.
 - 4. The Church is to glorify God. Eph. 3:21.
 - 5. Those who destroy the Church will be destroyed by God. I Cor. 3:16-17.
 - 6. Those in the Church are enrolled in the book of life. Heb. 12:23.
- F. John was in the kingdom. Jno. 1:9.

III. The Strict Terms Of Entrance Point To The Value Of The Church-Kingdom

- A. We must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Matthew 5:20.
- B. We must humble ourselves as a child. Matthew 18:3-4.
- C. We must be willing to sacrifice the things of this world.
 - 1. Matthew 19:21-24
 - 2. Matthew 19:27
 - 3. Luke 9:62
- D. Entrance into the kingdom requires a radical transformation called the new birth.
 - 1. John 3:3-5

2. Titus 3:5
3. II Cor. 5:17

IV. The Value Of The Church-Kingdom Can Be Seen In Its Indestructability

- A. The prophet Daniel foretold the indestructability of Kingdom. Dan. 2:44.
- B. The angel Gabriel said the kingdom of Christ will have no end. Luke 1:33.
- C. The gates of hell or hades cannot prevail against Christ's church. Matthew 16:18.
- D. Nothing can shake the kingdom of God from its foundation. Heb. 12:28.
- E. The Caesars and the Roman Empire have vanished forever. Mussolini and Hitler are dead. Facism and Nazism are defeated. Marx, Lennin, Stalin, Mao-Tse-Tung are dead and when Communism dies out the Church will be around to preach its funeral! The head of the Church of Christ will call them out of their Christless graves can hurl them into the bottomless pits of hell!

CONCLUSION

SURELY, WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THIS LESSON THAT JESUS DID NOT FAIL TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM. HE DID NOT PUT THE CHURCH IN ITS PLACE. OUR LORD IS NOT COMING BACK TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM.

1. We must preach the church-kingdom. To do so is to preach Jesus.
2. The Church-Kingdom is an institution of incalculable value.
3. Are you in the New Testament Church — you must be in order to be saved. Eph. 5:23-25.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE JUDGMENT

INTRODUCTION

If you were listing the first principles of the gospel, would you include the judgment?

1. Paul did. Heb. 6:1-3.
2. The doctrine of the eternal judgment is part of the foundation that undergirds the Christian life.
3. Let us now examine some basic truths about the judgment.

I. The Certainty Of Judgment

A. Judgment is as certain as death. Heb. 9:27.

1. All believe in the reality of death. As we look back over our lives, we often ask where are the companions of our youth. The answer is, "on the eternal campground their silent tents are spread, they bivouac with the dead."
 2. The living know that they shall die. Ecc. 9:5.
 3. If one can believe in the reality and certainty of death, he can believe in the certainty of judgment.
- B. Judgment is as certain as the resurrection. (Acts 17:30-31). Both natural and special revelation convince us that there will be the raising of the dead. If we can believe this, we can believe in the judgment.
- C. Our conscience, that umpire that tries to tell us what is right or wrong cries out, there will indeed be a day of accounting. There must be a day of justice, a day when all the injustices of life are made right. (Prov. 11:12, Ecc. 8:10-13).
- D. The judgment is as certain as prophecy. If we believe that the prophecy of Isaiah 7:4 was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. (Matthew 1:23). If we believe all of the three hundred plus prophecies concerning Jesus have been fulfilled, and then we can certainly believe in the Biblical doctrine of the resurrection. (John 5:28-29).

- E. The judgment is as certain as the reliability of the Bible itself. We believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God. (II Tim. 3:16-17, II Pet. 1:20-21). Verses like Acts 24:25, II Pet 2:98, Heb. 9:27, II Cor. 5:10, Rom. 14:12, Mt. 1:46, and others tell us of judgment.
- F. The judgment is as certain as the existence of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:8).

II. The Judge

- A. Jesus will be our judge. He was virgin born. He lived a sinless life. He died to save us from our sins. He is the ideal judge because he was man. (I Tim. 2:5). He was raised from the dead. He will come again and judge the world.
 - 1. John 5:22
 - 2. Acts 17:30-31
 - 3. II Cor. 5:10
 - 4. Matthew 25:31-33
 - 5. II Tim. 4:1,8
 - 6. Acts 10:42
 - 7. Hebrews 12:23
- B. He has all authority. John 5:27.
- C. He has all power. Matthew 28:18.
- D. He will be impartial.
 - 1. Rom. 2:6,11
 - 2. John 5:30
 - 3. Rev. 22:12
 - 4. II Cor. 5:10
 - 5. Isa. 45:21
 - 6. Psalm 89:14
 - 7. Matthew 16:27
 - 8. Gen. 18:25
- E. He knows all. Nothing will be hidden from him.
 - 1. Heb. 4:13
 - 2. Rom. 2:16
 - 3. I Cor. 4:5
 - 4. Ecc. 12:14
 - 5. Gen. 18:21

- 6. Rev. 2:23-14:13
- 7. I Tim. 5:24-25
- 8. Luke 12:2
- F. The story is told of a man who lived in Alaska. When he left his family, he would leave a large dog to protect them. Once when he returned from a journey the dog came down the trail to meet him. The dog was covered with blood. The man feared that the dog had turned on his family. He shot the dog. He later found out that the dog had killed a wolf to protect his family. There will be no mistakes like this on the day of judgment by Jesus.

III. The Subjects Of Judgment

- A. All who have ever lived will face judgment, (II Cor. 5:10).
- B. Nations will be judged. Matthew 25:32.
- C. Cities will be judged. Matthew 11:23-24.
- D. Individuals will be judged. Ecc. 11:9, Heb. 4:13, Rom. 14:12, Mt. 25:30.
- E. Angels will be judged. II Pet. 2:4, Jude: 6, I Cor. 6:3.
- F. Satan will be judged. Matt. 25:41, Rev. 21:20, 20:1-3, Gen. 3:15, Rev. 12:9-12.
- G. His church or kingdom. Matthew 13:41-42, I Pet. 4:17.

IV. The Standards of Judgment

- A. Revelation 20:12 says that the dead were judged out of the things written in the books.
- B. Other scriptures refer to these books.
 - 1. Moses was aware of God's book. Ex. 32:32.
 - 2. Mal. 3:16 speaks of a book of remembrance.
 - 3. Luke 10:19-20 tells of having names written in heaven.
 - 4. Phil. 4:3 speaks of the book of life.
 - 5. The Hebrew writer states that the church of the firstborn is written or enrolled in heaven. Heb. 12:23.
 - 6. John the Revelator writes of the Lambs' book of life

in Rev. 20:15, 21:27.

7. It is called the book of the living in Psalms 69:28 and Isaiah 4:3.
- C. The books opened on judgment will be these.
 1. The Old Testament. Rom. 2:12.
 2. The New Testament. John 12:48.
 3. The book of life. Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, 21:27.
 4. We might also mention those without the law, who may be judged by the conscience. Rom. 2:12, Rom. 14:15.
- D. We will be judged on the basis of two things.
 1. Deeds — Rev. 22:12, II Cor. 5:10, Jas. 2:12, I Cor. 3:13-15.
 2. Words — Matthew 12:36, 37, Jas. 2:12, Jas. 1:26, 3:1-12.
- E. I think we can say that Abraham will not be judged by the law of Moses. David will not be judged by the law of Christ. Christians will not be judged by the law of Moses.

V. Jesus' Judicial Decisions

- A. The lost, the doomed, damned, the spiritual derelects will be condemned to an everlasting hell. There is no power among the wicked to resist this decision. There is no fortress to which they can flee. Humanity is like the chaff before the whirlwind and is like dry stubble before the flame. A black cloud of wrath hangs even now over their heads. The bow of God's wrath is bent. The arrow of Judicial punishment is on the string and nothing can stop this shaft from being made drunk with the blood of God's enemies.
 1. They will be characterized by everlasting shame and contempt. Dan. 12:1-2.
 2. God is angry with the wicked everyday. Psalms 7:11.
 3. They shall be cast into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41.
 4. Their punishment will be everlasting. Mt. 25:41.

5. They shall have a resurrection of damnation. Jno. 5:28-29.
 6. They shall have wrath indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish. (Rom. 2:5, 8-9).
 7. The blackness of darkness and the lake of fire and brimstone await the lost. (Jude 13, Rev. 20:15, 21:8).
 8. They shall suffer punishment, even everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might. (II Thess. 1:7-9).
- B. Christians, the saved, redeemed, the people of God will stand in stark contrast to the goats on the left hand. The sheep of God's pasture will stand at the right hand of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. They will hear him say, come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Matthew 25:34).
1. Christians will awake to everlasting life. (Dan. 12:2, John 5:28-29, Matthew 25:46).
 2. The saved will enjoy the honor, glory, peace, and incorruption of eternal life. (Rom. 2:7, 10).
 3. They will eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. White robes will be their clothing. They will know no more hunger or thirst. The sun will not strike them nor any heat. Jesus will guide them unto the fountains of the water of life, and God will wipe away tears from their eyes. (Rev. 2:7, Rev. 3:5, 7:15.17).
 4. Christians will never know tears, death, mourning, crying, or pain anymore. (Rev. 21:4).
 5. God's servants shall serve him, world without end. (Rev. 22:3).
- C. Judgment will not be held to tell man what his final destiny will be. (John 3:18).
1. All men will know at death, when their spirits descend into hades where they will spend eternity. (Luke 16:19-31).
 2. Judgment will be used to reveal a man's works. We'll know if we have built out of gold, silver, cost-

- ly stones, wood, hay or stubble. (I Cor. 3:10-15).
3. Judgment will tell us why we are going either to heaven or hell — this is pointed out in Jude: 15 and in Matthew 7:21-23, 25:31-46.

VI. The Time Of Judgment

- A. There is time reserved for judgment. (II Pet. 2:4, 9).
- B. It is a future event.
 - 1. Acts 24:23
 - 2. Heb. 10:29
- C. It comes after death. (Heb. 9:27).
- D. It comes after the second coming of Jesus. Matthew 25:31-46.
- E. It comes after the burning up of the earth. (II Pet. 3:9-15).
- F. It comes after the resurrection. (Rev. 20:11-15).

CONCLUSION

Daniel Webster was right when he said that the most sobering thought to enter his mind was the thought of standing before the great God of the universe to give an account of his life.

GENESIS OR EVOLUTION?

THE religious world in the heyday of Darwin was facing many challenges from the so-called scientific world. Yet, men quickly saw that evolution, unlike the many other theories of their day, was very quickly eating away at the vitals of Christianity. They knew that evolution could destroy all of man's faith in God. Thus, they began to fight the battle that began to range for the mind, and thus the soul, in a conflict which they recognized to be a great struggle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

Their plan of attack was simple. They began more than ever to shine the light of God's word into the lives of the many who had been deceived by the cunning speech and false theories of evolution, that men's souls might see the truth, purity, and simplicity of God's creation of mankind. They turned to God who could give them light and a plan of attack in His word, that they might destroy the monster of evolution that lies in the shadows to prey upon the minds of the lost and ignorant.

The theory of evolution, the idea of the development of complex organisms from simple organisms is nothing new. There were evolutionists among the early Greeks. Thales, Anaximander, Epicurus, and Lucretius, all suggested that living things as they knew them might have developed from simple forms. Aristotle, the greatest of all scientists in his day, believed in a complete graduation in nature. He believed that there had been a gradual transition from the imperfect to the perfect. He also believed that man stood at the highest point along this continuous ascent.

But just as modern science began with the Renaissance so the modern theories of evolution began with that movement. The early contributions to the theory of evolution were made by philosophers rather than by biologists. Bacon called

attention to the variations in animals and the bearing of this variation upon the origin of a new species. Descartes was one of the early mechanists. Kant believed that the higher organisms had developed from simpler forms.

The first of the biologists to make a contribution to the theory of evolution was the French naturalist Buffon. He spoke of the direct modifying influence of the environment. After Buffon came Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles Darwin. He expressed the same convictions as Buffon.

The first man to suggest a fairly complete theory of evolution was Chevalier Lamarck. He published his theories in greater detail in "Philosophie Zoologique". He developed his theory in the form of four postulates. First, he said life by its own efforts tends continually to increase the volume of everything which it possesses and to increase the size of its parts up to a limit which life itself determines. Secondly, the formation of a new organ is a result of a new need which has arisen and continues to be felt by the organism. Thirdly, he discussed the fact that the extent of development of organs and their power of action is proportional to their use. Lastly, he said that all changes occurring during the lifetime of an organism are transmitted to its offspring by the process of reproduction. These postulates have played an important part in the theories of evolution but another star was just coming over the horizon which placed Lamarck into the background.

The second most important theory of evolution was the theory of Charles Darwin, first published in "The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life".

Darwin was born the same day as Abraham Lincoln, February 12, 1809. He first studied medicine and then theology. His greatest interest however was natural science.

Later in life Darwin sailed around the world. On this trip he made exploratory trips and read incessantly. Darwin spent ten years in studying his notes and reworking them. From these ideas he published his book in 1859.

Darwin's theory, like that of Lamarck may be arranged in a series of postulates and conclusions. The first postulate was "Variation". Individuals of the same species differ. The second postulate was "over production". In most cases far more individuals are born than can possibly survive to maturity. Thus his first conclusion was the individuals that are to survive must compete with other members of the same species. The third postulate was the survival of the fittest. In this struggle for existence those individuals will survive which are best fitted for their environment. The fourth postulate was inheritance of favorable characteristics. He said that fit individuals pass their fitness on to their descendants. He thus concluded that new species arise by the continued survival and reproduction of the individuals best fitted or adapted to the particular environment.¹

The theory of evolution states that all living things are related. At the beginning there was one living cell and out of this developments have occurred with ever increasing variations until we have the world of nature as we see it now. The developments and variations have been said to be due to the law of natural selection. This seems to mean that in the struggle for survival the characteristics which are useful for survival persist and those elements which are not so useful or which are other wise handicapped die out.

Man is considered to be a product, possibly the final product, of this system. As to what his ancestry has been, there is no unanimity of opinion. The popular idea is that his

¹ J. Klotz, *Genes, Genesis and Evolution* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing Company, 1959), pp. 22-24, 30-32.

descent is from the higher anthropoid apes or else that man and the ape have a common ancestor. The critical point of issue is the assumption of this theory that man was not separately created but is himself a by-product of animal life.

The most telling point for the theory is the sameness that basically exists in all living things. By careful arrangements, you can construct a tree of descent starting from one single cell in increasing complexity to man himself. Each creature in this succession has features in common with those below it but also individual peculiarities as well. So far, this is indisputable science. Philosophy joins science at this point. It says that each unit developed into the next by a series of infinitesimal gradations. It is something like a moving picture. It is composed of a series of individual still pictures but the eye interprets as one moving image. Notice, though, how the interpretation of science goes beyond the facts themselves.

Actually there can be two alternatives facing man as to his origins. The evolutionary one would be that the creator started that first cell evolving and continued in one vast process of creation. Of course, then you would have to explain the gaps in the present record of living things. Why is it not a continuum now? In answer, you could probably say that it would be if many creatures had not become extinct. The other alternative is that God made His first living thing so perfectly that He decided to make all the rest in the same pattern, including such modifications as would suit His purpose for each. That way, you would not have any gaps to explain. Of course this would mean multitudinous separate acts of creation. But would this bother God anymore than one act? Even Darwin admitted that there would have to be one act of creation to start things off.²

Which alternative is the right answer for mankind ? To

2 J. Janucey, *Science Returns to God* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), pp. 58-60.

find the answer let us examine the postulates of Darwin. Darwin's first postulate dealt with variations. He stated that those of the same species differ. Well, what kind of variations are there in nature? There are minute variations between individuals, in every conceivable direction. Darwin based his whole theory on these variations. It was the accumulation of these minute differences through many generations that enabled natural selection to separate the fit from the unfit. These are now known to be uninherited. To quote from the words of Vernon Kellog, the eminent biologist, "the results of modern biological study have shown that many of the small variations are not inherited. They are merely fluctuations around a mean to which the offspring constantly return. "In other words, though such small variations constantly occur in nature, they are not inherited. Evolution cannot have occurred through the accumulation of these small variations though successive generations, as Darwin thought, for they are not inherited at all.³

Darwin's second postulate dealt with over-population. He stated that more individuals were born than could survive to maturity. Darwin was convinced that as a consequence of this struggle there would be mass starvation, particularly in the animal world. He was greatly influenced by the gloomy theories of Malthus, who believed that human populations increase geometrically, whereas the food supply increases only arithmetically. Darwin was convinced that this was true of animals. Today's scientists believe that starvation is rarely a cause of death in wild populations.

It has been pointed out that animal numbers seldom grow to the limit of food supply and, except in some parts of the sea, not often to the limits of available space. Mass starvation of herbivorous animals, those which depend on plants for

3 F. Hamilton, *The Basis of Christian Faith* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers., 1946), pp. 63-64.

their food, is comparatively rare in nature says Elton, a noted scientist.

The third postulate of Darwin was the idea of the survival of the fittest. He said that in the struggle for survival only those that are to survive are best fitted to their environment. Yet, there are many instances in which the fittest individuals do not survive. Often the survival of one individual and the death of another is a matter of chance. This criticism of Darwin's theory was pointed out very early. In this way he may survive, even though he may not be as fit as his less fortunate neighbor. This is especially true where animals are victims of predators. Here it is often a matter of chances which individual supplies the predator with his dinner.

The fourth and last postulate of Darwin dealt with inheritance of favorable characteristics. So far as this theory is concerned, biologists today would say that the correctness of this statement depends on whether the character is a somatic or germinal character. A somatic character is one which is determined by the environment rather than by the genes and chromosomes which determine the heredity. Somatic characters are not inherited. Germinal characters are those characters which are determined by the the genes and chromosomes, and these are inherited. Darwin did not distinguish between these two kinds of traits. In his theory he was concerned with the fact that favorable characteristics could be developed and inherited.⁴

As we can see the evolutionary postulates of Darwin in the light of modern science have some merits, yet, on the other hand they leave a lot to be desired. There are still too many questions in the minds of scientists and theologians alike, that must be answered before this theory can be accepted as a scientific fact.

4 Klotz, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-35.

Now let us examine our second alternative that we might come to know our origin and place in this life. Certainly a new era in the relationship of the Bible to science began with the publication of "The Origin of Species" in 1859 by Charles Darwin. God was ejected from his creation, and nature gradually by natural selection evolved man from animal ancestors.

Bible believers saw the implications of such a conjecture, and the battle was joined. Organic evolution presented man as a descendent; the Bible presented man as a direct creation from the dust of the ground. Evolution postulated man's wife as a descendent of the animals; the Bible presented her as a direct creation from man's rib. Evolution postulated man's arrival as a result of animals reproducing not after their own kind; the Bible presented man and animal as reproducing after their own kind. Evolution presented man as wholly mortal; the Bible presented man as immortal. Evolution postulated an unknown origin of an unguided universe; while the Bible presented a creator effecting a planned and guided universe. So opposite were the two positions, it became impossible to believe in organic evolution and also to believe in the immortality of the soul and in the existence of God.

Attempts were made to harmonize evolution and the Bible by asserting that God's creation was through the process of evolution. What was called theistic evolution became popular with those who wanted to hold on to the Bible as well as to maintain current scientific conjecture. But again the compromise was impossible. If evolution postulated man as wholly an animal, there was no place for the doctrines of sin and atonement. A beast cannot sin. There would be no place for the image of God in man.

Attempts to make lists of the agreements between evolution and the Bible only serve to confuse the discussion. One could logically make a list of agreements between Jesus and Satan; both are intelligent, both have disciples, and both

have perserverance. Actually the only way to have harmony between organic evolution and the Bible is to change the Bible.⁵

Moses, speaking for God as he wrote of the creation of man in Genesis, chapter one, beginning with verse twenty six he said, "and God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And so God created man in his own image, in the image God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

Of woman, Moses said in Genesis 2:21-23, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man." Thus we have the story of the creation of man by almighty God.

We can see from the Genesis account than man is made in the image of God. Because of this fact man is always distinct from the animal. There is no animal that can maintain the

5 H. McCord, *From Heaven or From Men* (Austin, Texas: Firm Foundation Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 26.

erect position that is natural to man. This is due to a rather strange structure of man's lower extremities. Apes which are called man like, such as the gorilla, the chimpanzee, the orang-utan, and the baboon in their natural state walk in a slouched-over position. As they ramble through the jungle they rest their weight on the back of their front paws. As they amble along, they sway from side to side with a curious motion, and rise only to their legs under stress of great excitement, strong suspicion or in reaching for food. On the other hand, man is extremely uncomfortable in anything but an upright position, or in the comfortable position assumed when resting in an easy chair.

As a further expression of the God-like image of man given to him in creation, we would argue his mentality. Man is blessed with a type of memory that nothing else in creation possesses. We are, of course, familiar with the apparent memory feats of such a creature as a dog or a horse. These, however, learn by rote and habitual acquiescence. Things repeated in one physical performance after another soon became as a natural characteristic, and the things which animals thus learn are peculiarly different from the memory feats of man. We cannot conceive of a troop of chimpanzees performing on a lighted stage, "The merchant of Venice," "Romeo and Juliet," or "Midsummer Nights Dream"! No ape can act as a prompter to the actors of a grand opera, and the memory feats of man mark him far above beasts. This same thing is seen in his power of abstract thought. It is natural and instinctive for man to reason from cause to effect, and by these powers, possessed by no animal, marvelous things are accomplished by him.

The main argument for a special creation of man, however, is the one great fact that raises man above the level of beast, namely, the universal consciousness of God. It has been said that there is no such thing as a natural atheist. A few men, moved to bitterness by the circumstances of life, have attacked the fact of God. This is a sad set of circumstances

which we find only in so-called civilized circles. It is usually the result of an unsound philosophy on the part of those who are liberally uneducated.

Atheism is as foreign to a man as a song would be to a turtle. If we were to define in one argument the first difference between man and beast, we would put it in these words: There is no animal so high in the scale of development that it worships God; there is no man so low that he lacks this trait. No matter how far you get off the beaten tracks of civilization or how low a tribe may be in culture, they have their consciousness of God. Even among the wild tribes of the Upper Orinoco it is customary for them to take a bit of blue clay, mold it into a weird image like unto nothing on the earth, the water beneath, or the sky above. Decorating this outlandish monstrosity with monkey fur and toucan feathers, they bow down and worship the intangible idea of God which is made concrete with this image. The humblest black in the heart of Africa has this in common with the servant of white civilization. We are all conscious of the fact of God! This is the last residuum of that mighty fellowship which Adam possessed when he was created by the hand of God and in breathed by His divine breath.⁶

Darwin searched the earth and sea and air, in hope of finding some animal midway between two genera, in hope of finding a "missing link" between the genera, in hope of finding a "missing link" between man and his animal ancestors. In Patagonia he found a tribe of such degraded Indians that Darwin thought they had no sense of right and wrong. If these were human, and yet had no moral discernment, they would afford a link between beasts and man.

Allen Gardiner, a retired British naval officer, heard of the use Darwin was making of those Indians. He organized

6 H. Rimmer, *Modern Science and The Genesis' Record* (Grand Rapid, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Co., 1952), pp. 277, 278; 288, 289.

the South American Missionary Society, and personally went to Patagonia. Though he never lived to see the unregenerate, murdering Indians converted, Gardiner's successors finally effected a moral revolution among the Indians often they had been taught about God and Jesus. Darwin admitted astonishment and even appreciation. He sent a donation to the society, and requested to be made an honorary member.⁷

Thus, even Darwin himself could not prove this theory of evolution conclusively. Over a hundred years has past since he brought forth his ideas which have caused a great deal of controversy between the scientist and the theologian. Yet, even in the highly scientific world we live in today, man can not successfully remove God from the creation of humanity and the world. Because we are mortal men, man has limitations placed upon him in his quest to find his origin. The greatest scientific works can only offer theories and not conclusive facts.

Only those who put their faith and trust in God and His word can declare their origin. David, the psalmist said in Psalms 8:3-9, "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honor. Thou has madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. No evolutionist will ever be able to make such a declarative statement like David the Psalmist.

Picture in your mind if you possibly can, the world of the evolutionist. He lives in a world without God, a world which

7 McCord, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 27.

simply came about through some accidental, cosmological miracle, somewhere in the furthest reaches of outer space. Imagine living in the world of the evolutionist who himself is but a creature, who by some yet unproved process, evolved from the slime and muck of some misty corner of the universe. Fathom the thoughts of a world upon which only the most durable survive. A world which turns its ears from the cries of its poor, sick and desperate. A world in which there would be no reason for love, kindness, reverence, and respect or any other humane quality which in its purest form really separates man from beast. What kind of world would it be if men free from the slightest compunction, began to live as if there were no tomorrow or day of answer for their lives?

Imagine men just seeking out an existence, without hope for the future, a world in which there was no real reason to live, nothing to give man hope beyond the grave, truly, this would be a most miserable world. The evolutionist's world without God and only what could be achieved in a lonely, barren, wind-swept earth, upon which man as if suddenly awakening from a dream, finds himself upon, would be bleak, indeed.

Man's very nature tells him, though he may not be well versed in the laws of science that evolution is still just a theory and not a scientific truth. This same nature of mankind tells him though he may not be a theologian, that the Biblical account of the creation of men has stood the test of time because it is the most reasonable and logical account that man has access to today. Man cannot deny the accuracy and dependability of the Bible in its relation to science. Mankind who is made in the image of almighty God regardless of how hard he may try, cannot still the small voice, the inner man, who is thrilled to a majestic mountain, a sunset, the roaring ocean, or the birth of his own child. All of these things tell man that he is not an accident or a mass of protoplasm just floating along on the great sea of life. They tell him that the earth was made for man to subdue and to rule. They tell him that man has a

purpose in his existence. Man the crowning point of God's creation was created in God's image to live a life of obedience and glorification to God his creator. EVOLUTION OR THE GENESIS ACCOUNT?

A LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA

TO PROPERLY understand Christ's letter to the church in Philadelphia, we must examine some introductory material relative to the book of Revelation itself and the city of Philadelphia.

The word "revelation" is of Latin derivation and means "unveiling". It is the translations of the Greek word "apocalypse". The last book of the Bible was named by its author, "The Apocalypse (unveiling) of Jesus Christ". The title (as also the same phrase in I Cor. 1:7; I Pet. 1:7, 13; & II Thess. 1:7) refers to the visible return of the Lord. But elsewhere the word almost always refers to the making known of truth.

The book of Revelation belongs in the class of Apocalyptic literature in which the divine message is conveyed by dreams or visions. The title which the book assumes (1:1) may mean either "the Revelation which Christ possesses and imparts", or "the unveiling of the person of Christ".¹

The text of Revelation indicates that the book was addressed to the "Seven Churches of Asia." The churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea are the churches addressed. Perhaps the number "7", which is a symbolical number for completeness, indicates that the book was for all the churches in Asia Minor. These seven were undoubtedly selected because they were representative of all the churches of Asia Minor. It then would be up to those churches to spread the Revelation because of their strategic points geographically.²

1 M. Tenny, *Zondervan Pictorial Dictionary*, Revelation, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), pp. 720, 721.

2 R. Summers, *Worthy is the Lamb* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1951) p. 87.

The condition of the Christians who first received the Revelation was very critical. Christianity for several decades had remained unnoticed by the Roman government. It had been regarded as part of the Jewish religion, which was legalized by Rome. When it became known that Christianity was separate from Judaism, Christians found themselves in difficulty with the government. There are several reasons for this. First, Christianity was an illegal religion. Religion in Rome became legal as long as it didn't try to proselyte. But of course the Christian religion couldn't be bound with this restraint. Secondly, Christianity was an exclusive religion. It would not tolerate a mixture with the heathen and with the world. Thirdly, Christians were accused of all manner of evils, such as cannibalism, when they heard of them, "eating flesh and drinking blood", (reference to the Lord's Supper). Fourthly, Christians refused to go to war. Fifthly, Christians were mostly from the poor, lower classes of people. Sixthly, Christians were in conflict with many of the temporal interests of many of the Roman priests, makers of idols, and venders of sacrificial animals. Seventh, and perhaps the most important of all, the early Christians could not bring themselves to worship the Roman Emperor.³

Now let us look briefly at the recognition of the book of Revelation by the early church. Papias is probably the first writer to make use of the Apocalypse. Though the fragments of this author's "Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord", preserved in Eusebius, do not mention such use, there is allusion to his acquaintance with regard for the Apocalypse in Andreas' commentary on the last book of the scripture (6th cent.). Independent testimony for the same general area and time as John's comes from Irenaeus, who speaks of the verification of the true text of Rev. 13:18 by men who saw John face to face. Justin (140 A.D.) speaks clearly "A certain man among us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 89.

Christ, prophesied in a revelation made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would spend a thousand years in Jerusalem." This statement was probably made around 130 A.D. The earliest reference to the Apocalypse as scripture is found in the letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul to the churches of Asia Minor in reference to the hatred and persecution against the Christians. The quotation of Rev. 22:11 follows. Irenaeus is a significant witness because of his early residence in Asia and Rome before settling down in Lyons as head of that church. He quoted freely from the Apocalypse. The Shepherd of Hermas, written in Rome about the middle of the second century reveals a knowledge of the Apocalypse. A few decades later the canon of Muratori included John's Apocalypse.⁴

The next matter for our consideration is the date of the book of Revelation. The time is somewhat affected by the plan of interpretation adopted. Those who think most of the symbols were fulfilled by the time Jerusalem was destroyed (A.D. 70), place the time of writing previous to that date. Those who consider the symbols as prophetic pictures of the church over a long period of time accept the date A.D. 95 or 96, in the probable reign of Domitian in contrast to the earlier date between A.D. 65-70 under the reign of Nero.⁵

Without going into a detailed discussion of the arguments of both dates let me just list a few of the most outstanding arguments of both sides and let the reader make his own observations. Those who hold to the early date point to the fact that Jerusalem is mentioned in (Ch. 11), as though it were still standing. Secondly, Clement in his "Quis Dives Salvetur" puts the story of John and the robber chief after John's return from the isle of Patmos and represents the apostle as still a vigorous man. In the third place the Canon

4 E. F. Harrison, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), pp. 427, 428.

5 J. Hinds, *Revelation* (Nashville, Tenn: Gospel Advocate Co., 1962), p. 9.

of Muratori states that Paul, in the imitation of the example of his predecessor, John, wrote to the seven churches only by name. So strange a statement would put the chronology of the Apocalypse even before Nero!⁶

Yet, on the other hand the predominance of the evidence seems to be on the side of the later date. The later date seems most likely to me for the following reasons.

First, this was the understanding of the majority of the ancient church. Irenaeus says, "It was not seen very long ago, almost in our own generation, at the close of the reign of Domitian." Victorinus at the end of the third century said, "When John said these things, he was on the isle of Patmos, condemned to the mines of Caesar Domitian. There he saw the Apocalypse and when at length grown old, he thought he should receive his release by suffering, but Domitian being killed, he was liberated." Secondly, the date agrees with the condition of the churches in Asia as referred to in the seven letters to the seven churches. Third, it was only in the reign of Domitian that the worship of a living emperor began to be promoted in Asia. Nero's persecution seemed to have been confined to Rome and was not for religious reasons. Participation in emperor worship was a mark of loyalty in the empire. Domitian was the first to understand that there was an enigmatic figure who threatened to destroy the glory of the emperors. He was the first to declare war on this figure and the first to lose. Fourthly, Laodicea appears a prosperous city in the third chapter, yet, in the year 62 A.D., during Nero's reign it was destroyed by an earthquake.⁷

For our last area of this brief introduction let us look at the authorship of this book of Revelation. Did the apostle John author this book or was it some other John?

6 Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 447, 448.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 446, 447.

Few details are given by the book of Revelation about its author. He did not claim apostleship, but called himself, "your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus." He wrote the book while staying in Patmos, a rocky island in the Aegean Sea where the Roman government had a penal colony to work the mines. Tradition affirms that John had been arrested under the persecution of Domitian and that he had been condemned to work in the mines.⁸

The very fact that the author of the Apocalypse calls himself John indicates that he was very well known. He was known not only in one particular locality but throughout the other churches of Asia. Does not the conclusion seem warranted that the person who was so well known must have been the apostle John?⁹ Further, there is a tendency to use the name of Jesus without the article which is common both to the Revelation and the fourth gospel. The word "witness" as (verb of noun) is of frequent occurrence. The word "strive" is found thirteen times in John and ten times in the Apocalypse, while it occurs only five times outside John's writings. Again the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10 is quoted in Rev. 1:7 and Jno. 19:37. The same word "pierce" is found in both accounts but it is not found in the Septuagint version of the Zechariah prophecy.¹⁰ When we add to all of this the very strong tradition that the apostle John was banished on the isle of Patmos, Cf. 1:9, and that he spent the closing years of his life at Ephesus, to which he addressed the first of the seven epistles of the Apocalypse, the conclusion that the last book of the Bible was written by the apostle John is inescapable.¹¹

8 M. C. Tenny, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Company., 1957), p. 15.

9 W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House., 1965), p. 17.

10 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

11 Hendriksen, *loc. cit.*

Now let us observe some background information relative to the city of Philadelphia, its people, and the times themselves as they related to the church in Philadelphia.

The town itself is very picturesque. It is situated on four or five hills and is well supplied with trees. It is noted for its healthful climate. One of the mosques there is believed to have been the gathering place of the church mentioned in the Apocalypse.¹² The city of Philadelphia is twenty-eight miles Southeast of Sardis. It was founded by Attalus the Second in 140 B.C. Attalus was called Philadelphia and it was after him that the city of Philadelphia was named. Although the city of Philadelphia was not very ancient, from the earliest times there had always been a settlement on the site upon which it stood. It was one of the most strategic cities of the world. Philadelphia stood at the place where the borders of three countries, Mysia, Lydia, and Phrygia. Philadelphia commanded one of the greatest highways in the world, the highway which led from Europe to the east. It was the gateway from one continent to another.¹³

Philadelphia was founded for a special purpose and with a special intention. It was founded to spread Greek culture and the Greek language to Lydia and Phrygia and so well did it do its work that by A.D. 19 the Lydians had forgotten their own language and were all but Greeks. Thus, Philadelphia was the center for diffusion of Greek language and Greek letters in a peaceful land by peaceful means. This is what the risen Christ means when he speaks of the open door set before the church in Philadelphia. Three centuries before Philadelphia had been given an open door to spread Greek ideas in the lands beyond; and now it has come to another great missionary opportunity, an open door to carry to men who never

12 M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Company., 1946) Vol. II, p. 463.

13 W. Barclay, *Letters To the Seven Churches* (New York: Abingdon Press., 1967) pp. 79, 80.

knew its message, the love of Jesus Christ.¹⁴

This region was subject to earthquakes and the city was largely destroyed in a great earthquake in A.D. 17, but through the generosity of the emperor, it was rebuilt like the city of Sardis. This was a wine producing region and we are not surprised to find that the chief pagan cult was the worship of Dionysus, the god of wine. It was probably not a large church and there is every evidence that the church here was small (see vs. 8). Apparently, its principal opponents were the Jews, since verse 9 refers to the "synagogue of Satan", a term already used in the letter to Smyrna. There is no mention of persecution by the Roman officials, nor opposition by the pagans.¹⁵

Though Philadelphia did not acquire the neocorate until the beginning of the third century, its special loyalty is shown by the titles assumed on its coins; under Caligula and Claudius it styled itself Neocaesarea and under the Flavin emperors, Flavia.¹⁶

Philadelphia had another characteristic that lights up the letter written to it. It lay on the edge of a great plain called the Katakekaume, which means, "The Burnt Land". It lay on the edge of a great volcanic area. In one way this brought tremendous prosperity, for that great plain was one of the most fertile areas of the world. Philadelphia was also famous for its hot springs and Philadelphia was and still is a center to which the infirm came to bathe in the medicinal waters. The products of Philadelphia's prosperity went out to the ends of the earth and into it came people from many a land in search

14 W. Barclay, *The Revelation of John* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press., 1959), p. 15.

15 F. Pack, *Revelation* (Austin, Texas: R. B. Sweet Company., Inc., 1965) Part I, p. 45.

16 H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company., 1906), 64.

for health and healing.¹⁷

Because of their situation the citizens of Philadelphia lived an unsettled and troublesome life. Whenever the earthquake tremors came and they came often, the people of Philadelphia fled the city into open country. Then when the earth was quiet again, they returned. In their fear there were always going out and coming in. This frightened rhythm of flight and return had become part of their lives. The promise of the risen Christ to his faithful servant is, He shall go out no more.” (Rev. 3:12).¹⁸

Philadelphia is said to have remained longer than any of the seven cities mentioned in Revelation. The city still exists but with a Turkish name.¹⁹ It was still a Roman town until 1392 A.D. It fell after persistent resistance, into the hands of the Turks. Its name now is Ala-Sheber, the “city of God”.²⁰ It now has a population of about 10,000.²¹ Philadelphia today possesses a few Greek churches and one ancient pillar.²²

With this background material in mind let us now go on to an exegesis of the text of Christ’s letter to the church in Philadelphia. The word angel here is the word “Angelos” in the original language and it means, “a messenger”. Who were the angels to the seven churches? The following are the principal interpretations. First, there were officials known as angels or messengers of the synagogues and these may have been transferred to the church. Yet, these were mere clerks

17 Barclay, *Seven Letters*, p. 81. (another reference to the work cited in n. 13.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 82.

19 Hinds, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

20 M. F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* Philadelphia, (Chicago: Moody Press., 1957) p. 856.

21 J. Cox, *Revelation in 26 Lessons* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company., 1956), p. 33.

22 T. Elkins, *The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets* (Austin, Texas: Firm Foundation Publishing House., 1942), p. 70.

or readers; so that their positions do not answer to that the angels presiding over the churches. There is, besides, no trace of the transfer of that office to the Christian church. Secondly, some think they are angels proper. They are the heavenly guardians of the church, say some. This is urged on the ground that the word is constantly use in the Apocalypse of a heavenly being; by reference to the angels of the little ones (Mt. 18:10) and to Peter's angel (Acts 12:15). It is urged that if an individual may have a guardian angel, so may the church. But why should the seer be instructed to write to a heavenly messenger with exhortations to repentance and fidelity and describe them as "rich", "poor", and "lukeworm"? Thirdly, some believe that the angels are a personification of the churches themselves. The church then is spoken of as if concentrated in its angel or messenger. But in Rev. 1:20, they are explicitly distinguished from the churches or the golden candlesticks. Fourthly, they could be the rules and the teachers of the congregation. Under this interpretation two views are possible. First, the angels are Bishops. Secondly, it could have been used of the ministry collectively. This may have included both presbyters and deacons, who represented and who were responsible for the condition of the churches spiritually.²³ This is the most sensible view and I accept it.

The word "church" is the word "ekklesia" in the Greek and means, "the called out, an assembly, a congregation". It was used among the Greeks of a body of citizens gathered to discuss the affairs of state. In the Septuagint it is used to designate the gathering of Israel. It comes from two words, "eh", "out of" and "kaleo", "to call".²⁴ The word Philadelphia comes from Philadelphia and is from two words "Phileo" which means "love of friend or brother" and from

²³ Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

²⁴ W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Westwood, N. J: Flemming H. Revell Company 1940) pp. 83, 84.

“adelphos” which means “brother”. Thus, the word means, “brotherly love”. The city was named after the Pergamene king Attaus II. Philadelphus.²⁵

In verse 7 we find a fourfold description of Jesus found nowhere else in the New Testament. First, he is depicted as, “he that is holy”. The word “holy” here is the word “hagios” which fundamentally signifies (among the Greeks, dedicated to the gods), and hence in the scripture in its moral and spiritual significance, separated from sin and therefore, consecrated to God, sacred.²⁶

This statement is a direct claim of oneness with God, who is forever separated for evil.²⁷ The Greek mind never rose to that Biblical conception of holiness that because God is holy, we, too, are to be holy. This conception appears only in the religion of revelation and is not found in a synonym. It is found only in *hasios*. In it are concentrated all the main principles and aims of the divine revelation to men who are to be *hasoi*. As God is ever “the Holy One”, so is our Lord, “the Holy One”. This indeed declares Christ’s duty, but in the sense here presented.²⁸ Christ is called the “Holy One” in Acts 2:27; 13:35 and in Heb. 7:26. In these passages the word, however, is *Hosios*, which is holy by sanction and applied to one who diligently observes all the sanctities of religion.²⁹

The second phrase that describes Christ is “he that is true”. The word “true” here is “*alethinos*”. This word

25 J. H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House., 1962), p. 653.

26 Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

27 J. W. McGarvey, *McGarvey's Class Notes* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company., 1957), Vol. IV, p. 34.

28 R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press., 1943) p. 138.

29 Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

means, “true in the sense of genuine. The word is formed with an “A Privative” which makes the word mean to uncover or reveal to the observer whether or not something is real or spurious, claiming to be true when it is not.³⁰

From this word we learn that Jesus was not a false Christ, but the true or genuine Christ. In Christ is reality. When we are confronted with Christ we are confronted with no shadow outline or image of the truth, but with Truth itself. In Him we are confronted with no substitute for divinity and godhead, but with the genuine reality of God himself.³¹

Thus the words Hagios and Alethinos, should be viewed as divine attributes. See Hosea 11:9; Jer. 10:10; Rev. 4:8; I Thess. 1:9; Isa. 6:3; and I Jno. 5:20. Persons and things are spoken of as holy and true, but no created being has the essential moral glory of being the “Holy One & The True One”. As employed in verse 7 they are employed as divine titles.³²

The third phrase that describes Jesus in verse 7 is, “he hath the key of David”. This verse probably has reference to Isa. 22:22, where it is a description of Eliakim, the faithful steward of Hezekiah. The king had given him the key so that none could gain admission to the royal palace and to the royal presence except through him alone. Jesus is the steward of God. He is the one person who is able to introduce us into the presence and riches of God.³³ Christ as the Messiah (Rev. 5:5; 22:16) has exclusive power in heaven, on earth, and in Hades, (Mt. 16:19, 28:18; Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:9; & Rev.

30 J. D. Strauss, *The Seer, The Saviour, and The Saved* (Joplin, Missouri: College Press., 1963), p. 82.

31 Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, p. 161.

32 W. Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Westwood N. J: Fleming H. Revell Company., n.d.), p. 99.

33 Barclay, *Seven Letters*, pp. 84, 85.

1:18).³⁴ Truly, here is a picture of David who is a type of Christ, the supreme ruler of the kingdom of heaven. See Jer. 30:9; Ezk. 34:23, 37:23, 37:24. The house of David is a typical designation of the kingdom of Christ (Psm. 122:5). The holding of the keys, the symbols of power, thus, belongs to Christ as Lord of the church of kingdom. See Mt. 16:19.³⁵

The fourth description of Christ in verse 7 pictures him, “as he that openeth and none shall shut and shutteth and none shall open”. Here Jesus is described as, “hagiogon”, which is a present participle, translated as, “the one who keeps opening”. The word “shuts” here is, “kleiei” and is used metaphorically and is future, active, indicative. The word “opens” is “anoibei” and is present, active, indicative. It is translated and, “no one keeps opening”.³⁶ Again this is a reference to Isa. 22:22 and to the Philadelphians Jesus applied the words, “no man shutteth” to the promise that all the persecutors put together, could not shut their door, a door which the Lord had opened. When the door of any institution is shut, it is out of business. But the persecutors could not close the door of the Philadelphian church.³⁷

In verse 8 the word “know” is the word “oida”, which means, “perfect or absolute knowledge”. It comes from the word “eiswv”.³⁸ This perfect knowledge is indicative of the previous description in verse 7. Truly, the omniscience of God is taught here. The Lord has a full knowledge of all his people and is able, of course, to give a true estimate of their lives and opportunities in light of the circumstances which surround them. Jesus says further that he has perfect

34 A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman Press., 1933), Vol. VI, p. 316.

35 Vincent, *loc. cit.*

36 Strauss, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

37 F. E. Wallace, *The Book of Revelation* (Nashville: The Foy E. Wallace Jr. Publications., 1966), p. 101.

38 Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

knowledge of their “works”. The word here is “*ersa*”, which means, “every activity undertaken for Christ’s cause”.³⁹ Thus, God’s Son knows all about all that we do for him and it won’t be in vain. See I Cor. 15:58 & Rev. 2:10.

Further, in verse 8 Jesus tells the church in Philadelphia that he has, “set an open door before them”. The word for “opened” here is, “*aneobuenan*” and it is perfect passive participle and is to be translated, “having been opened”.⁴⁰ Only good is spoken about this church. There is no condemnation to offer. The Lord knows her work and is setting before her an open door which none can shut. He is giving her the open right-of-way to fulfill opportunities for service. This is the meaning of “the open door” in the New Testament usage. See Acts 14:27 & I Cor. 16:9.⁴¹ This may mean one of three things. First, a door of evangelism, a special opportunity to preach Christ in places in which he was well known. Secondly, it could have meant a door of refuge. That a trial of their faith was impending is indicated in verse ten. The Saviour stood ready to admit the faithful into a door of refuge. Thirdly, it could refer to a door of eternal happiness or blessedness. This door is always open to God’s people.⁴² I personally agree with the fact that this was an open door to preach the gospel. Jesus said that no man could shut this door.

Next we find a series of comments by Jesus concerning the church in Philadelphia. First, he says, “thou hast little power”. This cannot refer to weak spiritual strength. The Lord does not open the door for work to those who are only able to limp through and do little. Far better is the reference to numbers; nor need we fear to include the poverty of the

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

⁴⁰ Strauss, *loc. cit.*

⁴¹ Summer, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁴² Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

members and lack of social prominence.⁴³ This condition probably explains why the Lord reminded them of an “open door”. They needed encouragement. Their very weakness enlisted the Lord’s help. This was Paul’s experience. (See II Cor. 12:7-10).⁴⁴

Continuing in verse eight Jesus said , “thou didst keep my word”. The word for “keep” here is “etarasas” which is 1st aorist, active, indicative. It refers to definite action in the past. It probably is better translated, “didn’t keep”. This verb comes from “tereo” and means, “to give heed to, as of keeping commandments”.⁴⁵ Thus, over against the Jewish scoffers and accusers the church stood firm.⁴⁶ Certainly this church sets the proper example for all congregations of the Lord’s people.

He also said, “they did not deny my name”. The word “deny” here is “arnaso”. It also is 1st aorist, middle, indicative, 2nd person, singular, of arneomai.⁴⁷ It too refers to a definite past action. When we understand that the wearing of Christ’s name was one of the most despised and opposed principles of the Christian religion, we can appreciate more fully the little power these had which helped them to continue in the faith.⁴⁸ Thus, because they had kept the words of Christ and because they had not denied his name, Jesus blessed this small church with an open door. We may always expect that duties faithfully performed will lead to greater chances to do good.

The word “behold” here is “idou” which is imperative, middle, indicative 2nd person, singular from “eidon” which

43 Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

44 McGarvey, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

45 Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

46 Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

47 Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

48 W. S. Thompson, *Comments On The Revelation* (Memphis: Southern Church Publications, 1957), p. 42.

means, “to see”, it also calls attention to what may be seen or heard or mentally apprehended in any way.⁴⁹ Here Christ calls attention to the giving of the Synagogue of Satan to the church in Philadelphia. This is a promise that the church’s enemies will be humiliated before them. Perhaps the Jews in Philadelphia had attacked the church violently and had denounced the believers to the civil authorities, as had happened earlier in Thessalonica. (Acts 17:5-9, I Thess. 2:14-16). As in the letter to Smyrna these Jewish antagonists are called the “Synagogue of Satan”. (Rev. 2:9). These were men whose claims to belong to Judaism were falsified by their conduct.⁵⁰ The Jews and Jewish Christians had been at bitter enmity. The Jews boasted themselves to be the national and patriotic party, the true Jews, the chosen people, beloved and favored of God, who were hereafter, to be victors and masters of the world when the Messiah should come in his kingdom. They upbraided and despised the Jewish Christians as traitors, unworthy of the name of the Jews, the enemies of God.⁵¹ But the paths shall soon be reversed. This promise regarding their Jewish adversaries is broader and richer than the one given to the church in Smyrna. The “synagogue of Satan” probably refers to the Jews who depended on fleshly relationship, while denying that Christians both Jews and Gentiles, were the Lord’s people. In writing to the Romans, Paul said, “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.” (Rom. 2:28, 29).⁵² No doubt John has these thoughts in mind when he says, “they say they are Jews, and they are not”. Jesus further says they lie. The word “lie” is

49 Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

50 Tenny, *Interpreting Revelation*, p. 65.

51 W. M. Ramsey, *The Letters To The Seven Churches of Asia* (New York: Geo. H. Doran Co., 1904), p. 409.

52 McGarvey, *op. cit.*, pp. 36, 37.

“pseudontai”, present, middle, indicative of pseudomai and stands in contrast with alethinos of verse seven.⁵³ This lying certainly concerns our previous observations which related that they still called themselves the chosen of God but in reality they were living a lie.

Further, Jesus says of these Jews, that he will make them come and worship before their feet, that they might know Jesus loves the church at Philadelphia. Notice he says, “I will make.” The word “make” here is “poiaso” and is future, active, indicative, 1st person, singular of poieo.⁵⁴ Though this verb is future the context indicates it is soon to come. The word “worship” here is “prookunesosin” from “proskuneo” which means, “to make obeisance, to do reverence to, it is the most frequent word in the scriptures that is rendered worship.⁵⁵ This reverence or prostration before the feet of the church in Philadelphia is not adoration of the church. These Jews, who have been hating all Christians, will come right into the Christian assembly and there at the very feet of the Christians and their elders will bow in true repentance, realizing and acknowledging the exalted Messiah’s love which in the text is “egapesa” from the word “agape”. The wording is not at all figurative. But we must not imagine that Christians sat on benches or on chairs in their services. They sat cross-legged on the floor in Oriental style. To drop to the knees and to bow the head to the ground or floor is still the Oriental attitude of worship. The fact that the Jews who hated Christ, would come to the humble church in Philadelphia would scarcely have been believed by its members. The Lord here promises a wonderful victory. It is his special gift to this faithful church.⁵⁶ McGarvey differs from Lenski somewhat. He says, the word “worship”

⁵³ Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

⁵⁶ Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

denotes an attitude of reverence and so far as the term itself is concerned, it may refer to worship offered to God, or respect shown to superiors among men. The reference here likely means that the Jews in question would be brought to acknowledge the people of God.⁵⁷ I tend to agree with McGarvey.

In verse ten Jesus lists the reason behind the events that would happen as mentioned in verse nine. He said, "They kept the word of my patience." The word "keep" here is "eteresas" which is aorist and refers to definite past and punctiliar action. The word "patience" here is "upomones". This word can be literally translated as "endurance".⁵⁸ The reference here is not to the words which Christ has spoken concerning patience but the word of Christ which requires patience to keep it; the gospel which teaches the need of a patient waiting for the second coming of Christ.⁵⁹

Next comes Jesus' promise to keep them from the hour of trial. We also note that this will be a trial that will reach the whole world. Note here that they were not promised "exemption" from trial, but "preservation" through the period of trial. The word "trial" is *peirasmon* and is probably better translated "temptation".⁶⁰ There is possibly an illusion here to the catastrophes which had wrought such destruction in the city.⁶¹ Perhaps there is some food for thought here. But I believe that Swete is right when he says that the, "trial is coming upon the whole habitable earth which is what the word "gas" means. It refers to the troublesome times which precede the parousia. To the church at Philadelphia the promise was an assurance of safe-keeping in any trial that might come their way. It is at least interesting to note that in the

57 McGarvey, *loc. cit.*

58 Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, p. 166.

59 Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 466.

60 Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

61 McGarvey, *loc. cit.*

struggle with the Turks the church in Philadelphia held out longer than any of her neighbors.⁶²

Barclay comments that one of the most basic beliefs of the Jews was their belief to two ages. There was this present age, which was bad and under the sway of evil and there was the age to come, which would be the golden age of God. In between the two ages there was to come the day of the Lord. That would be a terrible day of judgment, of wrath, of separation of good and bad and utter destruction for everything and for everyone in the world against God. Thus, what is meant by this verse is that, when the day of reckoning comes, the man who has been faithful will stand the test and win the reward for his fidelity.⁶³

In verse eleven Jesus says he is coming quickly. Certainly we living today can witness to the fact that this did not mean an imminent, literal return. Instead, it is an idiomatic expression urging faithfulness and preparation. So far as the coming of Christ was concerned, it was imminent to those of John's day and it is imminent to us who live today, in the same manner as then.⁶⁴

The word "quickly" intends to keep us in constant expectation by shutting out any delay on the Lord's part. Already in Peter's time, more than thirty years before Revelation, mockers scoffed, "where is the promise of his parousia?" Everything remains just as it always has been since the creation. Peter said, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness." (II Pet. 3:9). Peter also said, "a thousand years are in his sight as one day and one day as a thousand years." (II Pet. 3:8). In other words, leave the date and the "times and seasons" (Acts 1:7), to

62 Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

63 Barclay, *Seven Letters*, p. 88.

64 Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 43, 44.

him and look to yourselves lest you be caught unprepared at his coming.⁶⁵ Certainly Lenski's observations are correct.

Based on the quickness of his coming, Jesus urges them to hold fast to that which they have, that no one take their crowns. The characteristic possessions of the church in Philadelphia were Christ's word, Christ's name, Christ's patience, and Christ's coming which are mentioned in the previous verses.⁶⁶ The word "crown" here is "stephanon". It denotes, "the victor's crown, the symbol of triumph in the games or some such contest, hence, a reward or prize."⁶⁷ It is not a question of someone stealing their crown. It is a question of God taking their crown from them and giving it to someone else because they were not worthy to wear it.⁶⁸ Jesus also gave a similar warning to the church at Ephesus in Rev. 2:10.

In verse twelve Jesus makes some promises to those who overcome the temptations to come upon them. First, he says, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God." The word "pillar" here is "stulon" and refers to a column. It occurs in Gal. 2:9; I Tim. 3:15; and in Rev. 10:1. The reference here is not to any prominence in the earthly church but to blessedness in the future state. The exact meaning is doubtful. Some explain, he shall have a fixed and glorified place in the glorified church. (Matt. 19:28). Others emphasize the idea of stability and find a possible local reference to the frequent earthquakes from which Philadelphia had suffered and which had shaken its temples.⁶⁹ In Philadelphia one who had served the state well was honored with an inscribed pillar in the temple of some god. When a priest had lived and

⁶⁵ Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁶⁶ W. Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Westwood, N. J: Fleming H. Revell Company., "n.d."), p. 106.

⁶⁷ Vine, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

⁶⁸ Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, p. 168.

⁶⁹ Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 467.

died in holiness and service, a pillar was added to the temple in his memory.⁷⁰ Undoubtedly these must be some illusions to Jesus' comments relative to the "pillar". The word "temple" here is "nao" and not "heron". It refers to a shrine or sanctuary in contrast to the entire building with its precincts which is inherent in "heron". Jesus continues by saying, "he shall go out thence no more". This may be a promise of security. For years Philadelphia and her citizens were terrorized by recurring earthquakes and tremors of the earth and how, when such times came they fled out into open country to escape the collapsing buildings and falling masonry, and who when the tremors ended came uncertainly back. The promise is that in Christ there will be no more of that. There is for the faithful Christian the promise of settled serenity in the peace which Jesus can give.⁷¹ To a church which had felt the insecurity of weakness, the accusations of God's reputed people and the threat of the hour of trial, this promise would indeed be good news.⁷²

Those who hold the earlier date of the book of Revelation take a slightly different view of verse twelve. For Wallace comments saying, "this is undoubtedly a reference to the demolition of the old temple. But for the church in Philadelphia which remained faithful, there shall be a new temple in which they will reside because of their faithfulness. This is a spiritual temple, which could never be destroyed; out of which they would never be compelled to go, in the case of the Jews in the destruction of the temple in the city of Jerusalem."⁷³ He might have some valid observations here for me if I believed in the early date but I don't. I feel that Barclay's comments are more in line with my views.

Next Jesus lists three names that those who overcome will

70 Barclay, *Seven Letters*, pp. 88, 89.

71 Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, p. 170.

72 Tenny, *Interpreting Revelation*, p. 66.

73 Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

receive. First, he mentions, "the name of my God." Swete says, "the name of God was 'put on' every Israelite in the priestly blessing (Num. 6:27); on members of the Israel of God it is to be inscribed by the Spirit of the High Priest (cf. II Cor. 3:3). Their lives and characters are to be dominated by the sense of their consecration to the service of God as He is revealed in Christ.⁷⁴ In the cities of Asia Minor and in Philadelphia, when a priest had for a life time faithfully discharged his duties, men honored him when he died, by erecting a new pillar in the temple which he had served, and by inscribing his name and the name of his father upon it. This then would describe the lasting honor which Christ pays to His faithful ones. It could be he has reference to the branding of slaves with the initials of his owners.⁷⁵

The second name is, "the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem. The word for "new" here is "kainen" from "kainos" which denotes, "that which is new as to form or quality of a different nature from what is contrasted as old."⁷⁶ This word stands in contrast to "noes" which signifies, "new in respect of time". The city of my God, the new Jerusalem which has her proper home in heaven (Rev. 11:9, 10), pours out her wealth of blessedness to crown the overcomer.⁷⁷ The name of the city stands for the gifts of citizenship in the city of God to the faithful Christian.⁷⁸ I tend to agree with Barclay here. Note the following words from Revelation 21:1-7 which confirm this view. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, behold, the tabernacle

⁷⁴ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁷⁵ Barclay, *op. cit.*, pp. 170, 171.

⁷⁶ Vine, *op. cit.*, pp. 109, 110.

⁷⁷ Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁷⁸ Barclay, *loc. cit.*

of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, anymore: the first things are passed away. And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, write: for these words are faithful and true. And he said unto me, they are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son.”

The third name is, “mine own new name”. This name could be the Saviour of all, the Light that lightens the Gentiles, the Christ, the Anointed One, the Redeemer of all mankind.⁷⁹ Swete disagree with Clarke here. Christ’s new name, “to onoma to kainon” emphasizes the “kanotes” which means, “new in quality, of a different nature from what is contrasted as old,” says Swete, and I think he is right. Thus, this can scarcely be one of the name of titles of Christ familiar to the church. The “new name” of Christ is more probably a symbol of the fuller glories of His person and character which await revelation at His coming.⁸⁰ The people of Philadelphia knew all about taking a new name. When in A.D. 17 a terrible earthquake devastated their city. Tiberius, the Roman Emperor, dealt kindly with them, remitting taxation and making them a generous gift to rebuild the city; and in their gratitude the Philadelphians for a time called their city Neocaesarea, the New City of Caesar; and later again Vespasian was kind to them, they called their city Flavia, for that was the family name of Vespasian. So Jesus Christ will mark His faithful ones with His new name; what

79 A. Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 1338.

80 Swete, *loc. cit.*

that new name was we need not even speculate, for no man knows it. (Rev.19:12). But in the time to come, when Christ has conquered all, His faithful ones will bear the badge which show that they are His and that they share His triumph.⁸¹ Lenski comments by saying, “the inscription of these three names is added to express permanence. These names seal the victor as forever belonging to God, the Holy City, and to the Lord. The writing of these names is symbolical. In connection with the white pebbles inscribed with the new name, (Rev. 2:17) we saw that these heavenly realities, even when they are put into earthly symbols, are very much beyond our conception. Just how these names will be written on each victor and in what language, with what ink, and how the writing will appear, we shall know in due time.”⁸²

Jesus closes the letter to the church in Philadelphia with these words, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches”. This exhortation is common to each of the letters written to the seven churches in Asia Minor. It sounds very much like one of the familiar sayings of Jesus found in the Gospels. (See Matt. 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mark 4:9, 23; Luke 8:8; 14:35). It might be pointed out that though Christ is speaking, it is the Spirit that is identified with him who is saying this message to the churches through the apostle John. The same close relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit is seen in II Cor. 3:17. This exhortation reminds us that while each church receives a specific message, the other churches are to pay heed to the message as it may apply to them. Though the letter is addressed to the church, and it is spoken of as a whole, the promises are to be given specifically to individual Christians that overcome.⁸³ The phrase, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,” comes at the end of the last

81 Barclay, *loc. cit.*

82 Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

83 Pack, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

four letters to the churches in Asia. Philadelphia is the “faithful” church, faithful in adhering wholly and solely to the Word and in confessing the Lord’s name. The faithful church receives the promise of success (v. 8, 9) and a special promise of protection (v. 10). Both reveal how highly the Lord thinks of every faithful, confessing church. He will reward every church of this kind. The rewards will not always be the same; they will vary according to the wisdom of God and according to individual circumstances of each faithful church but they will always be blessed.⁸⁴ I certainly agree with these last comments and would observe that a yearly study of the seven churches of Asia be made either in the classroom or in the pulpit.

84 Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

TO DEAL objectively with this subject, the inspiration of the Old Testament, we must in all fairness examine what the Old Testament itself has to say concerning its own inspiration.

There are many references to the Holy Spirit moving the great writers of the Old Testament to pen the words and the will of God. Let us now look to a few of these references to see what the Old Testament does have to say about itself. In Ezekiel 2:2-7, we read, “And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spoke unto me, and set me on my feet, then I heard him that spoke unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee to them; and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.”

Also in Ezekiel 3:11-14, we read, “Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of

my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.” Again in Micah 3:8, we read, “But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.”

Many other scriptures such as Psalms 19:7, 8; Deuteronomy 39:9; II Samuel 23:1, 2; and Hebrews 1:1, 2, may be considered with much bearing upon the previous vein of thought.

Yet, before we progress any further, it might be wise to define the term “inspiration” that we might get our proper bearings as we launch out in this quest for the inspiration of the older testament. “Inspiration is a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine Trust worthiness”.

Three factors must constantly be kept in mind in defining the doctrine of the inspiration of scripture. First, the primary cause, the Holy Spirit, who acts upon man. Secondly, there is the subject of inspiration; man, the agent, upon the Holy Spirit acts through the word of God. Finally, there is the result of inspiration, a written revelation once for all given and the roughly accredited, attested by miracle and fulfilled prophecy.

Certainly the Holy Spirit as the primary cause, acting on selected agents, is abundantly stated in both the Old and the New Testaments. Both Testaments declare they came not from man but by men moved by God’s Spirit. Peter again tells us of the Holy Spirit’s involvement in the revelation of the Old Testament in I Peter 1:10. Samuel quotes the words of David in II Samuel 23:1, 2, “The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue”.

The subjects of inspiration or agents of God’s word were the Old Testament prophets moved by the Holy Spirit. Again many scriptures verify the above statement. Heb. 1:1, 2;

Deuteronomy 34:9; Ezekiel 3:12, 13.

Finally, the result of inspiration, is a written revelation once for all given and thoroughly accredited. Jesus used the Old Testament as an authority, Matthew 4:4-10. Three times here Christ appeals to the Old Testament to flout the devil.

The Jews have always regarded the Old Testament as of divine origin. The writers of the Old Testament apocrypha recognized the canonical books of the Old Testament, as God given, God inspired, and authoratative. In I Maccabees 12:9 the author refers to the sacred oracles as "The Holy Books" of scripture.

The Torah was especially sacred, the source of all wisdom and incorruptible light. Moses was a "holy prophet", God's mouthpiece (Wisdom 11:1, Baruch 2:28).

Philo, the Jewish Alexandrian philosopher, who died about 50 A.D., held "divine inspiration in the most absolute degree" for the Pentateuch. Josephus, the Jewish Palestinian historian said, "whatsoever he (Moses) pronounced, you would think you heard the voice of God himself. (Antiquities IV 8, 49).

The early church throughout its history has consistently taught the inspiration of sacred scriptures. The early church fathers, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Justin Martyr quote extensively from the Old Testament in such terms as to preclude all doubt. They held these ancient oracles to be the divinely inspired word of God.

The true Biblical doctrine of inspiration renders the writers of scripture infallible of their communication of truth and inerrant in their literary productions. Yet, it leaves room for the fullest play of personality, style, educational, and cultural background of the individual authors. This view is called verbal, plenary inspiration.

By “verbal” inspiration is meant that in the original writings the Holy Spirit guided the actual choice of words used. On the other hand, the human authorship is preserved to the extent that the writer’s style, vocabulary, and individual difference are preserved but without the intrusion of error.

By “plenary” inspiration is signified that the accuracy which verbal inspiration assures, is extended to every portion of the Bible, so that is, as a whole and in all its constituent parts, infallible as to truth and “final” as to divine authority.¹

It is my belief that this is the doctrine of inspiration set forth by Christ and the apostles. This view preserves the dual authorship of the scriptures, that is the divine and human in perfect balance, giving proper consideration to each, which is accorded it in the Bible. The fundamentalist, the conservative scholar cannot hold to any other view concerning the inspiration of the Old Testament and remain true to his principles. Any other view would of necessity place one in the camp of Liberalism which I feel is untenable in the light of modern scholarship.

A scholar of the last century, Hartman, thought it questionable whether writing was known in Moses’ day. Consequently, Hartman denied the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. On the other hand, Christ explicitly asserted that Moses had written of Him. If there was no writing in Moses’ day, Christ was plainly mistaken!

Recent discoveries have proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that writing was known long before Moses’ day. Today no educated person would think of declaring that since the art of writing would have been unknown to him, Moses could

1 M. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), pp. 23–34.

not have written the Pentateuch.

This example is instructive and may serve as a warning. Difficulties in the Bible there are, and many of them we cannot solve to our complete satisfaction; but that they are actual errors in another matter! There must always be kept in mind the limitations of human knowledge. Much of what scholars of a previous day have proclaimed to be in error is now acknowledged to be true. The archaeologist's spade has revolutionized many opinions concerning God's will and word.

In the nature of the case, however, inspiration extends only to the original manuscripts of scripture. Since these manuscripts were inspired they were free from error. The originals are lost and we are today in possession only of copies, copies which contain textual errors and difficulties that no serious Christian can afford to ignore. These copies, however, do give the actual word of God. No point of doctrine has been seriously affected. Why God was not pleased to preserve the original copies of the Bible, we do not know. Perhaps these manuscripts would be made into images and relics of veneration which would have deflected one's attention from the message. Yet, God has preserved His word. We do not have a Bible which is unreliable and glutted with error, but one which presents the word of God and the text of the original.²

God has given this book, the Bible, to guide us home to heaven. Sixty-six books make up this Bible, thirty-nine which comprise the Old Testament. The Old Testament was given to us by about thirty authors. However, as stated previously, these men were not the authors of the books we call the Old Testament. Over a period of hundreds of years these men,

2 E. J. Young, *Thy Word is Truth* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 60, 61.

“spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit”.

There are two kinds of evidence that proves that the Old Testament is inspired of God. The first is its internal proof, the evidence within the books themselves. The second is the external proof, the evidence outside the books themselves.

Internal evidence is the most valuable in the examination of the claims for any subject or object. The best way to determine the nature of anything is by examination of the thing itself. If we want to know the contents of a bowl on the table, the best way is to look into the bowl and examine its contents. Therefore, we should turn first to the internal evidence of the Old Testament to show that it is a book of God.

The great unity of the Old Testament certainly provides us with a major starting point as we seek a basis of proof for the inspiration of the Old Testament. No mention is made of inspired writing in the first two periods of Old Testament revelation, those being the primeval period, that is up to the period of Abraham and the Patriarchal period continuing from Abraham to the birth of Moses.

Exodus 17:14 records God's first command to write down an event that is part of the scripture. It is true that inspiration is not here asserted for what Moses wrote; but the verse does claim to contain a direct quotation of God's words. Also, this writing by Moses was to be inserted in some sort of a book. It was to become a part, presumably, of some historical record already composed. This may account for the whole Pentateuch up to the point of Exodus 17.

On Mount Sinai God is specifically stated to have put the Decalogue, the moral standard of his testament, into writing. Its two tables consisted of words written by God's own hand (Exodus 24:12; 31:18; 32:16; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:10; 10:4).

The rest of the legislation of Exodus, the “Book of the Testament”, was written by Moses (34:27). God, that is, not only acted in history; He then left with His people an objective record and an explanation of His actions. Furthermore, since the record itself is God’s words, it also automatically becomes revelation.

As Moses began to publish sections of the Pentateuch, it is important that his own words that he had written appear with the same canonically binding authority as God’s. They were to be read before the people, even the children, every seven years. (Deuteronomy 31:10-13; Nehemiah 8:18). They were to be diligently taught by the priests. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Leviticus 10:11; Deuteronomy 17:18). The whole book of the Law was to be preserved beside the Ark. (Deuteronomy 31:26). The commandments of the books were neither to be added to nor diminished. (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32). Moses’ work thus came to be called simply the “Law of God”. (Nehemiah 8:18). At the outset of Joshua’s ministry, God charged him to be subject to the laws of Moses. (Joshua 1:18). Later, after his conquest of central Palestine, Joshua publically reaffirmed the divine authority of the law.

The unity of the Old Testament is further seen by the fact that David equated the “Law of Moses”, with the “charge of Yahweh”. (I Kings 2:3; Psalms 78:5, 6). Yet, David himself became a medium for God’s inspired words. The plans of the temple came to him and he was “made to understand in writing from the hand of Yahweh”. (I Chronicles 28:19). It is in this context that the source of inspiration is for the first time indicated as being God’s Spirit. (Vs 12).

David soon became “the sweet psalmist of Israel”. He knew himself on occasion to have God’s words on his tongue, so that the Spirit spoke by him. David was a true prophet. (Acts 2:30). The inspiration of David was no dictation inspiration; his personal emotions conveyed God’s words from a Spirit filled heart.

Solomon minimized books (Ecclesiastes 12:12), but not his own which he prized as coming from God (Vs 11). The "word" of the wise was thus treated as of equal authority with the commandments of the law. The very term "proverb" comes from a root word meaning "comparison", comes to identify not only a maxim or a parable, but also a specifically infallible dictum of God, as compared with the changeable opinions of men. Thus, the term "Proverb" may mean an "authorative statement" (Job 27:1; 29:1; 28:28).

Next, we shall go to the prophets. The eighth century prophetic period is the most significant for the Old Testament doctrine of its own inspiration. In the first place, what they wrote is expressly denied to be their own ideas. Certainly their own feelings are personalities entered into the picture. Their contemporary environments might well help to explain the particular words that they used. Yet, their basic experience was neither natural, nor did it come from themselves. They reacted emotionally and even with surprise, to what they saw or heard (Isaiah 21:3, 4; I Peter 1:10). They were fundamentally men who had the "Spirit of God." (Hosea 7:9). They were full of "the Spirit of Yahweh" (Micah 3:8).

The Spirit used different means to convey His message to the prophets. Sometimes they "saw" it, (Isaiah 2:1), sometimes in a vision, (Amos 7:7, 8). At other times they "heard" it (Isaiah 21:10). Again it came to them "audibly", or at least so quietly as to register in the prophet's ears alone (Isaiah 5:9; 22:14; 28:22). But the result was that their words were, at the same time, God's words. Amos, for example, spoke and then wrote, in the first person, as if he were God (Amos 3:7). Isaiah referred to his own book, which he had just written as "the book of Yahweh" (Isaiah 34:16). The prophets purpose in writing was that "the word" which the Spirit had conveyed to them might be preserved (Amos 8:16; Habakkuk 2:2, 3), "for the time to come for ever and ever." (Isaiah 30:8).

Their books, moreover, were accepted as God's words and were included in the developing canon of scripture as rapidly as they were written. Joel 2:32, for example, quoted Obadiah 17, with the identification, "as Yahweh hath said". Hezekiah recognized that the Psalms of David and Asaph were divinely authoritative (II Chronicles 29:30).

The evidence from the later (seventh century) prophetic period confirms the conclusions stated above. Jeremiah, like his predecessors, disclaimed his own mind as the source of information. In fact, what distinguished the false prophet was that they spoke "out of their own heart" (Jeremiah 23:16, 30; Ezekiel 13:2). Jeremiah had to pray for information (Jeremiah 32:16; 43:4). Sometimes he and his fellow prophets had to wait for answers (Jeremiah 47:7; Habakkuk 2:1). Sometimes God actually compelled them to speak and to write what was contrary to their own judgment (Jeremiah 17:16; 20:7; 9:1-6).

The writings towards the close of the Old Testament canon continue the unity of the Old Testament. During the exilic period that followed, the growing canon of scripture received testimony as to reality, both of its primary divine, divine authorship. During this exilic period an unnamed prophet produced the final compilation of I and II Kings. His parallel usage of the law and "prophecy" in II Kings 17:13 demonstrates the identical authoritativeness of these two major divisions of Old Testament literature.

After return from the exile the author of Chronicles, presumably, Ezra, described the Pentateuch as literally, "The Book of the Law of Yahweh", by the hand of Moses (II Chronicles 34:14). This phrase well conveys the balance of the divine and the human that constitutes the Biblical definition of inspiration.³

3 J. B. Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), pp. 63-70.

Truly, the unity of the Old Testament is remarkable. Its thirty-nine books written by approximately thirty men who were kings, shepherds, farmers, and fishermen makes it all the more remarkable. It was written in king's palaces, shepherd's tents, and in captivity. Part of the Old Testament was written by educated men and by unlettered men. Yet, all the books of the Old Testament bound with the New Testament make a complete whole. There are no contradictions or discord. These men could have written the Old Testament only by divine guidance. Just as the materials for Solomon's temple joined perfectly together because they were prepared under a great architect, so the books of the Old Testament blend together perfectly because they were written under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God.

The second method of internal proof for the inspiration of the Old Testament is its prophetic accuracy. M'Ilvaine gives a very clear definition of prophecy as "a declaration of future events such as no human wisdom or forecast is sufficient to make, depending on a knowledge of the innumerable contingencies of human affairs, which belongs exclusively to the omniscience of God; so that from its very nature prophecy must be divine revelation."⁴

Therefore, we can say that the existence of prophecies of the Bible is a mark of the supernatural. If the Bible accurately has predicted future events, events not possible for man to know, that accuracy of prediction proves only God to have authored the Old Testament.

There are many prophecies relating to cities after Jericho's destruction. Under Joshua the prediction was made that the man responsible for rebuilding the city would lose the oldest and youngest sons by death. Almost five-hundred years later

4 B. Ramm, *Protestant Christian Evidences* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1953), p. 82.

Hiel tried to rebuild Jericho and lost his first born son Abriam and his youngest son Segub.

The city of Damascus, prophesied Amos, would be punished even with fire. Isaiah asserted it would become a ruinous heap. The city has become a ruinous heap several times. In the eighth century B.C. the Assyrian monarch after capturing Damascus deported the inhabitants. Damascus was also reduced to ruins by Alexander the Great and again by the Saracens.

Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of four days journey, sixty miles in circumference. Its one hundred feet high walls supported fifteen hundred towers, each two-hundred feet high. God, because of its sins, predicted its destruction. His prediction was that it would fall by flood and fire. In 612 B.C. both of these came to pass. The Tigris washed away part of the wall, allowing the enemy to enter. The king erected a funeral pyre, burning his palace, household, and himself. Ninevah's site is now abandoned, and its famous name is threatened with extinction.⁵

The Bible also abounds in prophecies concerning nations and peoples. Abraham was not only the father of the Jewish nation but was the father of the Ishmaelites also. The prophecies concerned both the Jews and Ishmaelities in the Old Testament. Let's look now at the prophecy concerning Ishmael. "Twelve princes shall he beget" (Genesis 17:20). Moses names these twelve princes in Genesis 25; and Eusebius writing about A.D. 350 speaks of twelve Arabian princes of his time. "I will multiply thy descending exceedingly" (Genesis 16:10-12). This was God's promise to Hagar. "And he will be a wild man". What better description could be given of the Arabs who still roam the desert today. "And he

⁵ H. McCord, *From Heaven or From Men* (Austin, Texas: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1964), pp. 38-43.

shall dwell in the presence of his brethren''. For four thousand years the Ishamelites have dwelt in the presence of their brethren, the descendents of Abraham and Lot. Other nations have changed but they remain as a witness for the inspiration of God's older testament.⁶

There were also many prophecies about Egypt. In Ezekiel 30:12, 'I will make the rivers dry'; Isaiah 19:5, 6, 'And waters shall fail from the sea and the rivers shall become wasted and become dry. And the rivers shall become foul; the canals of Egypt shall be diminished and dried up; and the reeds and flaks shall wither away''. These prophecies were not fulfilled until the Mohammed conquest of Egypt in the seventh century. But after that time the canals of Egypt were gradually neglected and slowly filled up. Even the Nile itself today does not carry as much water as formerly and despite all modern attempts the irrigation system still only carries a small amount of water formerly served by canals.⁷

Lastly, there are many prophecies concerning individuals. Three hundred years before his birth, Joshiah's life had been foretold. The birth of a son to David's house, his being given the name Joshiah, and his zeal for Jehovah in disrupting idolatry, are things that no man could know unless God had placed them before him in a knowable fashion as He did for His prophets.

Six-hundred years before Christ, because some sons obeyed their father, God's prophet blessed that family forever. Near Mecca in the nineteenth century were found about 60,000 people who boasted descent from Rechab. They professed pure Judaism and knew the Hebrew language.

6 G. Dehoff, *Why We Believe the Bible* (Murfreesboro, Tenn; Dehoff, Publications, 1962), pp. 71, 72.

7 F. Hamilton, *The Basis of Christian Faith* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1946), p. 305.

The wicked Zedekiah would receive an unhappy recommendation for his disregard of God. The prophet announced that Zedekiah would be taken prisoner to Babylon and would die there. Yet, he would never see the city of Babylon. Later King Nebuchadnezzar put out his eyes before taking him prisoner to the city of Babylon.⁸

The prophetic accuracy of the Old Testament throughout its thirty-nine books are made as we have seen not only with major but also minor events. On the pages of history, both secular and divine, we have the fulfilment of these prophecies declared and in all of them not one minor detail is found to be lacking. Men have prophesied, but the high percentage of error in their predictions makes the Bible stand out more distinctly and will always prove that the Old Testament had to be a work of inspiration.

Thirdly, we have the historic and geographic accuracy of the Old Testament to declare its inspiration. The remarkable fact of geographic accuracy has come to light through excavations, from monuments, and geographic research. The peoples, places, and events of the Old Testament are found just where the scripture locates them, in the exact locality and under the exact geographical circumstances described in the Bible. Correctness concerning the place of an event, is the most important mark of a true happening. When the excavations in Palestine, Egypt, and Babylonia have so marvelously supported the accuracy of the Bible geographic references it is hard to see how critics can challenge it in other areas of accuracy.⁹

The Egyptian treasure city of Pithom has been discovered according to its supposed geographic location in the Bible. The actual storehouse built by Hebrew slaves have been

8 McCord, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 46.

9 Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 171, 172.

found, the lower portions made of brick containing straw and the upper portion without straw. Meneptah II, perhaps the Pharoah of the Exodus, and his mummy has been found. A hymn of victory addressed to him mentions Israel and the inscription tells of the death of his young son, possibly in the last plague sent upon the Egyptians by God.¹⁰

One of the strongest arguments for the historicity of the Old Testament is found in the accuracy with which the names of the kings mentioned in the Old Testament have been transmitted to us. It happens that the names of forty one of the kings mentioned by name in the Old Testament from the time of Abraham down to the end of the Old Testament period are also found in contemporary documents and inscriptions written in the time of, and usually under the direction of, those kings themselves, in their own language. In these forty names, there are one-hundred and sixty-one consonants. These forty one names contain the names of five Egyptian, five Assyrian, five Babylonian, five Persian, and nine Hebrew kings, besides various other names of kings in other countries. The remarkable thing about these names is that everyone of these names can be recognized perfectly in contemporary documents of the countries over which they reigned, and that the consonants found in forty one names are found in the documents and monuments of the countries over which the kings referred to reigned.¹¹

Although the Old Testament does not profess to be a geographic treatise, yet in all of its pages not one error along these lines can be discovered. When the Bible speaks of a place geographically, it is found to be correct. Geographers have wondered at its accuracy and this is even more remarkable when we know that some of the writers had never visited the land they wrote about.

¹⁰ Dehoff, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹¹ Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 183, 184.

So, also it is with history, for though men thought in times past the Old Testament to be in error, they are now aware of their own mistakes. Excavations in recent years have put to flight the critics of the Old Testament. Thus, its inspiration is declared, for how could men, unfamiliar with land or events of which they wrote, have been so accurate without the hand of God upon them?

The next area of evidence used to prove the inspiration of the Old Testament is that of external evidence. Here even the enemies of the Word bear witness of its inspiration by God.

First, the popularity of the Bible declares its inspiration. It cannot be questioned that the most published book in the world today is the Bible. It was the first significant translation from one language, Hebrew, to another Greek, in the Septuagint. It was the world's first printed book, Guttenburg's Latin Bible which sells for more than a hundred-thousand dollars a copy today. It is said that the British and Foreign Bible Society to keep up with the demand must publish one copy every three seconds every day and night. Over 32, 876 copies are printed every day of the year and are being sent all over the world.

We cannot take these figures too lightly. Consider the stiff competition the Bible faces. It must compete with such masters of the ancient world as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Homer. In later times the Bible has competed with such literary men as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, and Wordsworth. It must compete with the finest poetry, gripping drama, fascinating biography, entertaining mysteries, and many other types of works. Yet, meeting the greatest literary masterpieces in the world, the Bible still wins.

No book has ever been translated and retranslated as much as the Bible. The English Bible alone has a number of translations such as the Bibles of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, and Geneva, the Bishops Bible, King James Version,

the American Standard Version, and the Revised standard version. There are also many other translations on the market done privately or by various churches. The number of translations is over a thousand and the conclusion we can draw must be that the Bible is the most translated and retranslated book in the history of mankind.¹² Whereas books by men are soon revised and discarded, the Bible has come through the ages as the "best seller". In every age the Old and New Testaments are loved and revered by millions of men and women. Man in every age has accorded the Old and New Testaments a place which he has denied all the writings of men and thus has borne witness that it is inspired of God.

Secondly, the power and strength of the Old Testament in overcoming its enemies and its critics, has shown its inspiration. Certainly this has been proven already in our discussion of the unity, prophetic, historic, and geographic accuracy along with the Old Testament's popularity.

Even when books are not persecuted, not many survive the generation in which they are written. Yet, the Bible presents a freshness and relevance to every generation because the same basic problems and sins face each generation that were faced when the Old Testament was written during its successive generations.

The nation which produced the Old Testament also produced other books, but they did not survive. The surviving Jewish apocryphal books maintain a currency only because of their relation to the Old Testament. Men and nations rise and fall but the Old Testament lives on.

The emperor Diocletian by edict in 303 A.D. ordered all copies of the Bible destroyed. But with his passing, copies of the Scriptures reappeared and multiplied. Even Rome

¹² Ramm, *op. cit.*, pp. 229, 230.

could not exterminate the Bible.

Besides physical violence against the scriptures many attempts have been made by unbelievers to discredit their claim. Voltaire, who died in 1778, predicted that after his attacks against the Bible, in one-hundred years the Bible would become extinct. Yet, after his death the British and Foreign Bible Society was founded and it used Voltaire's writing room as a storeroom for Bibles. The very press used to print Voltaire's atheistic claims was used to print the Bible.¹³

At no other time has the Bible been in greater danger than when the Popes of Rome held world power. Instead of spreading the Bible they suppressed it.

Pope Innocent III, in 1199, had French Bibles burned at Metz and forbade the people to have more. The Council of Tarragona, in Spain, under Pope Gregory IX, in 1234, ordered people to bring their Bibles to be burned. Ferdinand and Isabella, 1474-1516, forbade the people to have Bibles. Wyclif was condemned for heresy by the Synod of Oxford in 1383, because he translated the Bible. Ten thousand Bibles were burned at Graez in Steiermark on August 8, 1600 by order of Ferdinand II, the emperor. The Jesuits boasted of burning 60,000 Bibles in the year 1637 in Bohemia.¹⁴

The Bible throughout the last four thousand years has weathered the storms of Judaism, heathenism, heresy, barbarism, the papacy, and modern infidelity. No other book has endured such onslaughts, physical and mental, as the Bible. A book of human composition could not have endured the tremendous attacks and careful scrutiny of the Old Testament found in the book we call the Bible.

¹³ McCord, *op. cit.*, pp. 96, 97.

¹⁴ Dehoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 116.

Archaeology has done much to also point out beyond any doubt the power the Bible has over its critics. Biblical archaeology, shedding light upon the historical background and contemporary life of which the Holy Scriptures came, and illuminating and illustrating its pages with its truly remarkable discoveries has provided irrefutable evidence for Bible believers.¹⁵

For example, in searching for evidence of the antiquity of the Pentateuch archaeology has played a major role. It was assumed that writing was unknown in Palestine during the Mosaic period and that the Pentateuch could not have been written until the tenth or the ninth centuries B.C. The references to the Hittites were also treated with unbelief and condemned as mere fiction on the part of later writers of the Torah. But since the days of Hupfeld, Graf, and Kuenen, archaeology has confirmed the use of writing based on an alphabetic system in Canaanite cultures of 1500 B.C., and has contributed a number of documents demonstrating the very definite existence of the Hittites.¹⁶

The third evidence of external proof for the inspiration of the Old Testament is the superiority of the Old Testament as a part of the whole Bible over every other field of life. In literature it is unequalled, as a code of laws it stands supreme, as a way of life it is superior to all the philosophies of men, as a source of comfort it stands alone.

In the field of religion for example Westcott, in an interesting article distinguishes the sacred books of the pre-Christian ethnic religions from the Old Testament scriptures under three headings. First, they are unhistorical. In no case

15 M. Unger, *Archeology and The Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954), p. 9.

16 G. L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), p. 155.

is the revelation or authoritative rule given in them represented as embodied and wrought out step by step in the life of a people. The doctrine is announced and explained while fenced in by comment and ritual; but it finds no prophets who unfold and apply the divine words to the varying circumstances of national growth, which at once fix their application and illuminate their meaning.

Secondly, they are retrogressive. The oldest portions of the several collections of the Chinese, Indian, and Persian scriptures are noble in thought and aspiration; and secondly, ritual in each case has finally over-powered the strivings after a personal and spiritual fellowship with God.

Thirdly, they are partial. In their most completed form they may be said to be 'a psalter completed by a law of ritual.' 'On the other hand, the Bible contains every element which the representatives of different races have found to be the vehicle of religious teaching and every element in its fullest and most fruitful form.

The ethnic scriptures are essentially national or at least racial, they are bound by limits of place and time, the natural products of the circumstances in which they arose; and the Bible may be admirably adapted to the needs of place and time, it alone appeals to man as man, and most marvellously combines a truly historical character with an adaptability to be the religious guide and instructor of mankind.¹⁷

Perhaps we could see more clearly the Bible's superiority over the books of the world religions by observing the chart.

Only the Bible portrays deity as a holy, kind, and interested Father. Only the Bible has a Genesis 3:15. Nowhere, save in the religion of the Bible, and the systems that borrowed from

17 J. Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1963), p. 295.

SACRED BOOKS	DOCTRINE OF DEITY	DOCTRINE OF MAN	DOCTRINE OF FUTURE
1. Hindu Veda	Evil in gods pantheism polytheism nature worship	Caste system begging penance pilgrimages suicide degradation of women	Reincarnation
2. Buddhist Tripitaka	atheism	morality asceticism persuasion forgiveness	Nirvana
3. Shintoist	nature worship ancestor worship emperor worship	Confucian morals faith healing suicide will of emperor	none
4. Zoroastrianism Zend-Avesta	Polytheism dualism	Hatred sword	Afterlife
5. Confucianism The King	Atheism ancestor worship	Morality	None
6. Islam Koran	Legalistic fatalistic monotheism	Sword polygamy hatred degradation of woman	Man's sensual heaven
7. Bible	Fatherly monotheism	Sin unavoidable salvation monogamy love individual worth persuasion holiness	Spiritual heaven

it, is there a full view of the perfections of God. Except in the Bible, and in the Bible influenced religions, deity is not

independent of nature and even a supreme deity has his power shared by other divinities. All of the other religious books speak of higher truth, but only one speaks of that truth as found in a loving personal God, our Father.

Only the Bible portrays the universal brotherhood, the inestimable worth, the exalted dignity of man. Only the Bible portrays a humble yet optimistic view of man's purpose. All other religions express man's sense of dependance, but only one provides fellowship with God.

Only the Bible presents a view of human life that is not cheap and low. Only the Bible presents life as it really is worth living. Though the alleged sacred books of other religions have exerted a tremendous influence, yet "there is a vast difference in the kind of influence". The elements of "Will, Holiness, Love, and Life which characterize Judaism and Christianity", and which have resulted in reborn lives, distinguish them from "all other religions". Other religions are "not redeeming and are real hinderances in the way of individual and social progress".

Only the Bible presents an abundant life in the world to come, towering above all things sensual and sensuous. Beyond the pleasures of this life, beyond the miseries of this life, only the Bible portrays a vista of spiritual happiness unending.¹⁸

Thus, the Bible is free of all that is bad in other religions and has excellencies above all other religious books. The discouragement intended when people try to take God's word and compare it with other religious books becomes a boomerang when other books are considered.

Unlike other religious books the Old Testament abounds

¹⁸ McCord, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 112.

in realism. It lacks prudishness. It deals with sex, sin, and the facts of life realistically. It is neither delicate beyond what life is like, nor frank to the point of obscenity. It lacks asceticism. It knows that human appetites are real and God given. The emphasis is not upon an artificial abstinence but upon realistic self-control. It lacks fanaticism. It lacks extreme mysticism. By extreme mysticism is meant those unusual experience of mystics, those of unconsciousness, ecstasy, and spiritual eroticism. The Old Testament on the other hand places a constant and a strong emphasis on the holy, true, and good.¹⁹

Man today can recognize and come to know that his personal relationship to the Old Testament and to the Bible as a whole is due to the living message of its contents. He understands that the Bible is the book of the church and is not a textbook or a devotional book. He knows that it is not an accidental collection of books, but that it transcribes in characteristic features, the life of the human race as it developed under the influence of the history of revelation. For the Christian belief the Bible appears thus as a great fact in which God appears as the great Creator who has inseparably interwoven divine knowledge with a clear testimony of man's ability to conquer sin by the grace of almighty God.²⁰

Picture in your mind if you can the world of a man who denies the inspiration of the Old Testament. What further implications have to be derived from such a stand as this! He, whether he admits it or not, lives in a world without God, a world by implication of his position, which simply came about through some accidental, cosmological miracle, somewhere in the furthest reaches of outer space. Imagine living in the

19 Ramm, *op. cit.*, pp. 246, 247.

20 M. Kachaler, "Wherein The Bible is Unique," *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. S. M. Jackson, II (1952), p. 83.

world of this individual who himself is but a creature, who by some yet unproved process, evolved from the slime and muck of some misty corner of the universe. Think of the way he views the world. It is a world where only the most durable survive. A world which turns its ears from the cries of the poor, sick, and desperate. A world in which there would be no reason for love, kindness, reverence, and respect for any humane quality which in its purest form the slightest compunction, began to live as if there were no tomorrow or day to answer for what they do in their lives.

Imagine men just seeking out an existence, without hope for the future, a world in which there was no reason to live, nothing to give man hope beyond the grave, truly, this would be a miserable world.

He who denies the inspiration of the Old Testament has to deny the New Testament and Jesus who quoted from the Old Testament as the word of God. Man thus becomes a mass of protoplasm just floating around in the great sea of life.

But thanks be to God that we can definitely know that the Old Testament is truly God's inspired word by examining its internal evidence, the unity, prophetic, historic, and geographic accuracy and by examining its external evidence, its popularity, power over its critics, and its superiority over other books, especially those of the other world religions prove beyond all doubt that the Old Testament is inspired by God.

REVELATIONS ABOUT REVELATION

THE WORD "Revelation" is of Latin derivation and means "unveiling". It is the translation of the Greek, "Apocalypse". The last book of the Bible was named by its author, "The Apocalypse (unveiling) of Jesus Christ" and the title (as also the same phrase in I Cor. 1:7; II Thes. 1:7; I Pet. 1:7, 13) refers to the visible return of the Lord. But elsewhere the word almost always refers to the making known of truth in propositional or in experiential form.

The Apocalypse is the last book of the Bible perhaps due to its exclusive prophetic character. It belongs to the class of Apocalyptic literature in which the divine message is conveyed in dreams or by visions. The title which the book assumes (1:1) may mean either "the Revelation which Christ possesses and imparts", or "the unveiling of the person of Christ".¹

Perhaps we could better understand the book of Revelation and its introductory problems by first looking at some historical background that will enable us to better understand the problems involved in the writing of this introduction.

A period of about sixty years had passed since the church was founded in the city of Jerusalem. The apostles had all received the crown of martyrdom except John. Churches had been established in principal cities of Europe and Asia, but the growth of the new religion began to arouse the fears of Paganism that swayed the Gentile world. As John stood on Patmos, an exile by decree of the mightiest power the world

1 M. Tenny, *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), pp. 720, 721.

had ever seen, he probably knew of no country that was not under Roman domination. All of Africa, as far south as the desert which stopped the Roman armies; all of Asia, west of the Euphrates; all of Europe south of the Danube and west of the Rhine, with the island of Great Britain in the north ocean, were a part of the Roman empire. At this period, and for many generations after this, when the church is persecuted, the persecuter is always pagan Rome.²

The text of Revelation indicates that the book is addressed to the "Seven Churches of Asia". The churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea are the churches addressed. Perhaps the number "7", which is a symbolical number for completeness, indicates that the book was for all churches in Asia Minor. These seven were undoubtedly selected because they were representative of all of the churches of Asia Minor. The conditions found in these churches were to be found in others as well. It then would be up to these churches to spread the Revelation because of their strategic points geographically.

The condition of the Christians who first received the Revelation was very critical. Christianity had remained for several decades unnoticed by the Roman government. It had been regarded as part of the Jewish religion, which was legalized in Rome. When it became known that Christianity was a separate religion than Judaism, the Christians found themselves in difficulty with the government. There are several reasons for this.

First, Christianity was an illegal religion. Religion in Rome became legal as long as they didn't proselyte. But of course the Christian religion could not be bound with this restraint. Its very purpose is that of making Christians of other people.

2 B. W. Johnson, *A Vision of the Ages* Dallas: Eugene S, Smith Publisher., "n. d."), pp. 20, 21.

Secondly, Christianity aspired to universality. With the Romans the "STATE" was the main thing. With Christians the kingdom of God throughout the earth was most important. Christianity became a rival to the best interest of the state.

Thirdly, Christianity was an exclusive religion. It would not tolerate a mixture with the heathen and with the world.

Fourthly, the Christians were accused of all manner of evils, such as cannibalism, when they heard of them "eating flesh and drinking blood", (reference to the Lord's Supper).

Fifthly, Christians refused to go to war.

Sixthly, Christians were mostly from the poor, lower classes of people.

Seventh, they held the Romans in contempt.

Eighth, Christians were looked upon as fanatics because of their enthusiasm.

Ninth, Christianity was in conflict with the temporal interest of many of the Roman priests, makers and venders of sacrificial animals.

Tenth, Christians could not bring themselves to the practice of worshipping the Roman emperor.

Thus, the verdict of the imperial government after these reasons just listed above and because of the fact that national calamities such as famine, earthquake, lack of rain, were blamed on the Christians because of their attitude to the Roman gods, was that Christianity must be destroyed to preserve the Roman Empire.

The relation of John to these Christians qualifies him as

the medium for this Revelation. He went to Ephesus around 65-70 A.D. He was the leading Christian in Ephesus for the next twenty-five years. He knew their condition. He probably helped to convert some of them. They had shared much joy but now much affliction. That which was written in Revelation was undoubtedly written to comfort these Christians.³

With this background material in mind let us now turn to the recognition of the book of Revelation by the early church. Circulation of the book in Asia Minor at a time shortly after its composition is rendered probably by the concern that the churches addressed in the Seven Letters would naturally have for a work that mentions them so directly.

Papias is probably the first writer to make use of the Apocalypse. Though the fragments of this author's "Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord", preserved in Eusebius, do not mention such use, there is allusion to his acquaintance with regard for the Apocalypse in Adreas' commentary on the last book of the scripture (6th cent.). Independent testimony for the same general area and time as John's comes from Irenaeus, who speaks of the verification of the true text of Rev. 13:18 by men who saw John face to face.

Justin (140 A.D.) speaks clearly, "A certain man among us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, prophesied in a revelation made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would spend a thousand years in Jerusalem". This statement was probably made around 130 A.D.

The earliest reference to the Apocalypse as scripture is found in the letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul to the churches of Asia Minor in reference to the hatred

3 R. Summers, *Worthy is the Lamb* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1951), pp. 87-89.

and persecution against the Christians. The quotation of Revelation 22:11 follows.

Irenaeus is a significant witness because of his early residence in Asia and Rome before settling down in Lyons as head of that church. He quoted freely from the Apocalypse.

The Shepherd of Hermas, written in Rome about the middle of the second century, reveals a knowledge of the Apocalypse.

A few decades later the canon of Muratori included John's Apocalypse, noting that although he speaks to seven churches, he speaks to all of them.⁴

Tertullian says, "the apostle John beheld the city come out of heaven", referring to Rev. 21:10-23, in "Against Marcion" (III. XXV.). He refers to 1:16 and in the same work (III. XIV.), and to 2:14 in "Prescription Against Heresies", (Ch. XXXIII). He quotes from every chapter in the book with the exception of chapters 9, 13, and 15.⁵

Early in the third century, Hippolytus of Rome writing "On Christ and Antichrist and On Daniel", put himself on record as receiving the Apocalypse as scripture and as a writing from the apostle John.

The Alexandrian leaders Clement and Origen add their testimony to the same effect. To them the Apocalypse is of apostolic origin (John) and is scripture. Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.) tells of the return of "the apostle John" to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos, in "Who is the Rich Man

4 E. F. Harrison, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), pp. 427, 428.

5 H. C. Thiessen, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1943), p. 307.

That Shall be Saved?" (XLII). He speaks of those worthy to sit upon the twenty-four thrones, as in 4:4; 11:16, in "Stromata" (VI. XIII), and quotes 6:9, 11, with a slight change, in "Instructor" (II XI). Origen (223 A.D.) says in "De Principis" (I. 11. 10). "Listen to the manner in which John speaks in the Apocalypse", and then he quotes 1:8. In the same work (IV 1.25) he refers to 14:6 and says that it is, "employed by John in the Apocalypse". In his commentary on Matthew, from which Eusebius has preserved a fragment, he declares that tradition identifies the John who was banished to the isle of Patmos with the son of Zebedee.

Victorinus, writes the earliest commentary on the Apocalypse, that has come down to us. He refers to the statement about "seven thunders" in 10:3, 4, to John the apostles in this commentary.⁶

Thus, it is not surprising in view of the breadth of acceptance of the Apocalypse as represented by these and other men, that this common belief should be continued with Augustine and the Council of Carthage, all the way down into the modern church.

At this point in the introduction I deem it necessary to discuss the place of the writing of this Apocalypse of John. The place where John saw the Lord and witnessed the wonderful visions must possess some interest to us all. Sometime after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, John had taken up his abode at Ephesus and was spending the evening of his life with the churches of that part of the world called Asia.

When imprisoned he was sent to a rocky isle twenty miles from the coast of Asia Minor. It is near the southern part of the Greek Archipelago. This place is a rock in the sea, within

6 *Ibid.*, p. 318.

sight of the coast of Asia Minor. It was the custom of the Romans to send those who had fallen under displeasure into banishment and no place was more chosen for a place of exile than some rocky island.⁷ The isle of Patmos is only ten miles in length and six miles in width.⁸

It is a volcanic island and is bare and rocky throughout. The hills of which the highest rises to nearly a thousand feet gives a magnificent view of the neighboring sea and isles. The bay of La Scala, running into the land on the east, divides the isle into two nearly equal parts, a northern and a southern. Over the tops of Icaria, Samos, and Naxos rise the mountains of Asia Minor, among which would lie to the north, the circle of the "Seven Churches" to which his addresses were to be sent.⁹

The purpose of the book of Revelation has been a much discussed subject. Revelation was written at a time when efforts were being made to cripple the church. The community was ill prepared to meet the crisis precipitated by the Christians refusal to participate in "Emperor Worship". Most of the churches had become half-hearted in the matter of Christian living and faith (Rev. 3:16). The genius of John was not primarily foresight, but primarily insight into the real problems confronting the Christian community. He saw with clarity the issues on which Christians must make decisions and the far reaching consequences of those issues. John's ultimate concern, therefore, was not for a solution to the immediate problem of the empire's demand of emperor worship. Rather, he viewed the immediate crisis as a crucial stage in the conflict between God and the evil powers. Stead-

7 Johnson, *loc. cit.*, p. 20.

8 W. Smith, *The New Smith's Bible Dictionary* (Garden City, N. J.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 281.

9 M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company., 1946) Vol. II, pp. 421, 422.

fastness in this crisis would lead the churches to victory in which God's purpose would be reached.¹⁰

Harrison in his book dealing with New Testament introduction says, "In view of the nature of the book as prophecy, it is to be expected that information about the future is given not to satisfy curiosity but to fortify the church, to inculcate endurance and to bring consolation to suffering saints".¹¹

Thiessen in his book on New Testament introduction says concerning the purpose of Revelation, "The purpose of the book of Revelation is by the Holy Spirit Himself declared to be", "to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass" (1:1). God though does not reckon time as we do (II Pet. 3:8). This clause therefore, does not necessarily mean that the fulfillment will actually begin at once, but merely that we are to look for it to begin at any time in the future. Involved in this general purpose are such aims as the purification, encouragement, and fortification of the seven churches and beyond them the whole church and the establishment of God's people in the belief of the ultimate triumph of Christ and His cause.¹²

I would have to go along with what Thiessen has said for he sees both an immediate application to the churches who were presently undergoing much persecution and the futuristic application to the church who would always have to wage a continuing fight against its enemies until the end of time, realizing all the while that in the end, Christ and the church would have their victory.

The date of the book of Revelation has become one of the

10 H. C. Key & W. F. Young, *Understanding the New Testament* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957), p. 454.

11 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

12 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

major problems in an introductory study of this kind. The question of the date will probably be settled by finding out which emperor was reigning over the Roman Empire at the time of the book's composition. The following is a listing of the Roman emperors and the date of their reigns that the composition of this book of Revelation would have to fall under.

T. Berius, d. March 16, 37. Caligula, (Cajus Caesar) March 16, 37 to 1/24/41. Claudius, 1/24/41-10/13/54. Nero, 10/13/54 to 6/9/68. Galba, 6/9/68 to 1/15/69. Otho, 1/15/69 to 4/16/69. Vitellius, 4/16/69-12/21/69. Vespasian 12/21/69-6/23/79; Titus 6/23/79-9/13/81; Domitian 9/13/81 -9/18/96; Nerva 9/18/96-1/25/98; Trajan 1/25/98-8/?/117.

Every effort to date Revelation during the reign of Claudius is unsatisfactory. John was not slain by Herod in 44 A.D. together with his brother James nor together with James the Just in 62 A.D. A considerable amount of effort has been made to place the composition of the book of Revelation under reign of Nero.¹³

When was this book written? The time is affected somewhat by the plan of interpretation adopted. Those who think most of the symbols were fulfilled by the time Jerusalem was destroyed (A.D. 70), place the time of writing previous to that date. Those who consider the symbols as prophetic pictures of the church over a long period of time accept the date A.D. 95, or 96, in the reign of Domitian, as the most probable time.¹⁴

The early date fixes Revelation between 68-70 A.D. either

13 R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press., 1943), p. 11.

14 J. Hinds, *Revelation* (Nashville, Tenn: Gospel Advocate Co., (1962), p. 9.

at the end of Nero's reign or shortly thereafter. Several reasons may be urged in support of this early date.

First, Jerusalem is mentioned (Ch. 11), as though it were still standing. It would seem that an event of such magnitude would have been mentioned in the book of Revelation.

Secondly, an early date is thought to be in accord with the rather uncouth character of the Greek of the Apocalypse.

Third, Clement in his "Quis Dives Salvetur" puts the story of John and the robber chief after John's return from the isle of Patmos and represents the apostle as still a vigorous man.

Fourthly, the Canon of Muratori states that Paul in imitation of the example of his predecessor, John, wrote to seven churches only by name. So strange a statement would put the chronology of the Apocalypse even before Nero!¹⁵

In the first book of the eight volume set entitled "The History of the Christian Church", by the world recognized historian, Philip Schaff, the author cited twenty reputable scholars who assign the date of Revelation to the early Neronian period before the destruction of Jerusalem, who also applied its descriptions to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the Jewish theocracy, the fall of Judaism, and the end of the Jewish state, all in the fierce struggle with the Roman empire. Among these scholars listed were Moses Stuart, Samuel Davidson, Ewald, Bleek, De Wette, and Cowles, who were named by Schaff on page 837 on the first book.

Other notables mentioned from other sources who hold this early date are, Westcott and Hort, Farrar, and Lightfoot.

¹⁵ Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 447, 448.

Schaff places the beginning of the Neronian persecution in A.D. 64 and states that some of the best scholars from internal indications assign the date of the Apocalypse to A.D. 60-70 before the fall of Jerusalem.

The following are the arguments set forth by Schaff.

First, none of the leading apostles remained to record the horrible massacre (destruction of Jerusalem) except John, who must have had in view in his vision the Neronian persecution, the most cruel that ever occurred, when he called the woman seated on the seven hills, “drunken with the blood of the Saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”, and prophesied her downfall as a matter of rejoicing for the “Saints, Apostles, and Prophets”.

Secondly, the internal evidence of the Apocalypse itself and the comparison with the forth gospel, favor the earlier date before the destruction of Jerusalem. The unmistakeable allusions to imperial persecutions apply better to Nero than to Domitian. That John was exiled from Patmos under Nero, where he wrote the Apocalypse not later than 68, 69 A.D., not only before the destruction of Jerusalem; but before the gospel of John, and at least twenty years before the death of John at Ephesus.

The Apocalypse is a Christian counterblast against the Neronian persecution, with Nero as the beast of the abyss and the number 666 signifying the very name of the monster in Hebrew letters. NERON CAESAR — as follows N-50; R-200; O-6; N-50; K-100; S-60; R-200; the sum of which is 666.

Fourthly, that the Hebrew letters for 666 correspond to the Latin and the Greek, with the last letter N having been dropped by a copyist from the Latin, making the sum 616, which is the number in some texts.

Fifth, and last, the Apocalypse is based on the Lord's dis-

course in the twenty-fourth chapter of the book of Matthew, describing the fall and destruction of Jerusalem.¹⁶

Yet on the other hand the predominance of the evidence seems to be on the side of the later date, though many good arguments have been postulated for the earlier date of the composition of the book of Revelation. The later date of 96 A.D. seems to me to be the most likely for these reasons.

First, this was the understanding of the majority of the ancient church. Referring to Revelation, Irenaeus says, "It was not seen very long ago, almost in our own generation, at the close of the reign of Domitian". Victorinus at the end of the third century said, "When John said those things, he was on the isle of Patmos, condemned to the mines of Caesar Domitian. There he saw the Apocalypse and when at length grown old, he thought he should receive, his release by suffering; but Domitian being killed, he was liberated".

Secondly, the date agrees with the condition of the churches in Asia as referred to in the letters to the seven churches.

Third, it was only in the reign of Domitian that the worship of a living emperor began to be promoted in Asia. Nero's persecution seems to have been confined to Rome and was not for religious reasons. Participation in emperor worship was a mark of loyalty to the empire. Domitian was the first emperor to understand that behind the Christian movement there stood an enigmatic figure who threatened to destroy the glory of the emperors. He was the first to declare war on this figure and the first to lose the war. Revelation then attests the beginning of martyrdoms.

16 F. E. Wallace, *The Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Foy E. Wallace Jr. Publications., 1966), pp. 15, 19, 20.

Fourthly, Laodicea appears a prosperous city in chapter three, yet in the year 62 A.D., during Nero's reign it was destroyed by an earthquake.¹⁷

Fifth, and last, the message of the book, which clearly recognizes the Roman state as a rival to the church is much more pertinent to the later period than to the earlier.¹⁸

The general situation presupposed by the book is consistent with the early tradition of the early church which represents it as a work of the last years of Domitian. The evidence may be summarized briefly here. (a) The condition of the Asian churches described in chapters two and three, is that of a period considerably later than the death of Nero. The inner life has undergone many changes since the writing of the epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians and the two epistles of Timothy. Deterioration has set in at Ephesus, and at Sardis and Laodicea faith is dying or is dead. The Nicolaitan party, of which there is no certain trace in the epistles of Paul is now widely distributed and firmly rooted. The external relations of the churches show a similiar advance. In the past days Pergamum had witnessed a single martyrdom, now a storm of persecution was about to break out upon the churches and the faithful might expect to suffer imprisonment or death. (b) The prevalence of the imperial cult and the pressure being put upon those Christians who resisted by the Asiarchs, are suggestive of the time of Domitian rather than of Nero or Vespasian. Later Nerva did not maintain the aggressive policy of Domitian and when Trajan's rescript began to do its work, the petty persecution described in Revelation 13 would give place to a formal indictment before the proconsul. The more zealous persecution of Domitian who died in September 18, 96 A.D., probably came in the last

17 Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 446, 447.

18 J. M. Gettys, *How to Teach the Revelation* (Richmond, Va: John Knox Press., 1955), p. 16.

years of his reign with his jealous insistence that he must have divine honors, thus making the date between 90-96 A.D.¹⁹

The next question we shall consider is the problem of authorship. Did John the apostle author the book of Revelation or was it some other John who penned the Apocalypse?

Few details are given by the book of Revelation concerning its author. He did not claim apostleship, but called himself "your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus". He wrote the book while staying in Patmos, a rocky island in the Aegean sea, where the Roman government had a penal colony to work the mines. The text does not state positively whether he had gone to Patmos as a missionary. The language of Revelation could apply to either alternative. Although tradition affirms that John had been arrested under the persecution of Domitian and that he had been condemned to work in the mines.²⁰

As noted previously the author of the book of Revelation tells us his name is John, 1:1, 4, 9, 22:8. The question is: which John? The apostle or another? Some deny that John the apostle wrote the Revelation. John the author of the fourth gospel and of the other three epistles never mentions his own name, but the author of the Apocalypse tells us that his name is John.

Again it is pointed out that there is a striking difference between the style and general tone of the gospel and the epistles, on the one hand, and the Revelation on the other.

19 H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company., 1954), pp. 100, 101.

20 M. C. Tenny, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company., 1957), p. 15.

They say that there is a marked difference between the doctrine of the gospel and of the Apocalypse. The former is broadminded, universalistic, they say. The later is narrow-minded and particularistic.

Finally, around the year 250 A.D. there lived a man whose name was Dionysius of Alexandria. The great and pious man ascribed the book of Revelation to another man.

Some are convinced by these arguments that some other John wrote the Apocalypse. Some still believe John the apostle was responsible for the fourth gospel. Yet, others deny this and ascribe only the Johannine Epistles to him. While still others want to put another "John" as the author of all of the works of John the Apostle.

Let us now look at these arguments. The very fact that the author of the Apocalypse merely calls himself John indicates that he was very well known. Not only in one particular locality but throughout the other churches of Asia. Does not the conclusion seem warranted that the person who was so well known must have been the apostle John?²¹

The differences in grammar and style and general tone must be admitted. But the difference in the subject matter in the Apocalypse accounts for the difference in vocabulary. John may have written the Apocalypse without an amanuensis, while he may have had one for the other writings. Irregularities in grammar are not peculiar in Koine Greek. They are also found in many classical Greek works.²²

We might point out at this point at this stage of our argument that we should be careful not to exaggerate these differ-

21 W. Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House., 1965), p. 17.

22 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

ences in style and language. There is also a strong body of resemblances between the gospel of John and the Apocalypse. There are similarities even in peculiar grammatical construction, and also in characteristic expression. CF. Jno 7:37 with Rev. 22:17; Jno. 10:18 with Rev. 2:27; Jno. 20:12 with Rev. 3:4; Jno. 1:1 with Rev. 19:13; Jno. 1:29 with Rev. 5:6.

Again as for style, should we expect to find the same style in a history of events (the fourth gospel), a personal letter (the epistles) and the Apocalypse or unveiling (Revelation)?

As to the doctrinal differences, the simple fact is that the gospel and the Apocalypse do not clash on even a single point. In fact, the agreement is remarkable.

The gospel account calls Jesus "the Lamb of God", and so does the Apocalypse, twenty-nine times. The fourth gospel uses the title "the logos" with reference to our Lord and so does the Apocalypse in 19:13 and I Jno. 1:1. The gospel represents Christ as being pretemporal, eternal, and everlasting being, Jno. 1:1 FF.; so does the Revelation 22:13; 5:12, 13. On and on we could go showing the striking similarities.

Finally, the opinion of Dionysius, adopted by Eusebius, it should be clear that this view rests upon a misreading of every careful statement made by Papias and was probably influenced by opposition to Chiliasm which sought to justify itself by an appeal to the book Revelation.²³

The arguments of Dionysius were not really decisive, for he failed to consider the factors of agreement, particularly the underlying Hebraic character of the language in both cases and the entirely different character of the Revelation. Dionysius did not purpose that the book be removed from the

²³ Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

canon of scripture. But he succeeded in sowing seeds of distrust that depreciated the Revelation in the East for many years to follow.²⁴

Before we draw this point to a conclusion there are some other arguments that might help decide once and for all the question of authorship.

First, there is tendency to use the name of Jesus without the article which is common both to the Revelation and the fourth gospel.

Secondly, the word “witness” as (verb or noun) is of frequent occurrence.

Thirdly, the word “strive” is found thirteen times in John and ten times in the Apocalypse, while it only occurs five times out side John’s writings.

Fourthly, the word “overcome” is found sixteen times in the Apocalypse, one time in John, six times in First John, and only three times in other New Testament writings.

The word “dwell” (literally tabernacle) is found four times in the Apocalypse, and the only other reference to it in the New Testament is found in John 1:14.

Sixth, the expression “fountain of living waters” is found only in the Apocalypse 7:17; 21:6 and in the gospel of John 4:14; 7:38.

Seventh, and last, the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10 is quoted in Revelation 1:7 and John 19:37. The same word used for “pierce” is found in both accounts but it is not

²⁴ Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

found in the Septuagint version of the Zecharia prophecy.²⁵

When we added to all of this the very strong tradition that the apostle John was banished on the isle of Patmos, CF. 1:9, and that he spent the closing years of his life at Ephesus, to which he addressed the first of the seven epistles of the Apocalypse, the conclusion that the last book of the Bible was written by the apostle John is inescapable.²⁶

Certainly another question we must ask ourselves as this introductory study continues further is how do we interpret this book called Revelation? It makes a lot of difference in the approach one takes towards interpreting any book of the Bible. The so called "literary" approach, for instance, which dissects the book and finds nothing in it but sources, interpolations, redactions, etc., robs it of all significance, except that of a literary curiosity. Very different is that approach which recognizes the Apocalypse as a divinely inspired book, written at the command of God by the apostle John during the last days of his life. The one who thus approaches it will regard the book as a welcome gift of God which brings to him the redemptive purposes of God. This is what the book claims to be (1:1-3; 22:6 7). But even among those who accept it as divine revelation there are great differences of opinions as to the way it should be interpreted.²⁷

Adam Clarke lists four main methods of interpretation of the book of Revelation which are these:

First, some hold that the Apocalypse contains a prophetic description of the destruction of Jerusalem, of the Jewish wars, and the civil wars of the Romans. This first theory he ascribes to a professor Wetstien and other scholars on the European continent.

25 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

26 Hendriksen, *loc. cit.*

27 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

Secondly, some, he said, predict persecution under heathen emperors from Rome and better days under Christian emperors, from Constantine down through the stream of time. This second view, he says, was the view of the primitive fathers, both Greek and Hebrew.

Thirdly, some hold to the view that the book describes the tyrannical and oppressive conduct of the Roman pontiffs, the true antichrist; and foretells the final destruction of the papacy. This opinion came from a man named Abbe Joachim, who lived in the thirteenth century and was espoused by the Franciscans.

The fourth view set forth by Clarke as to the various interpretations of Revelation holds that the book is a prophecy of schism and the heresies of Martin Luther, and those called reformers, and their successors, and the destruction of the protestant religion. This view was held by popish writers who sought to get back in some way at Luther and the reformers.²⁸

Certainly Clarke brings us food for thought, but I feel that in view of the present day theories he is way off base. Although perhaps a hundred years from now men will look back upon us and say the same thing about our present day theories.

Modern scholarship today holds to four basic views as to the interpretation of the book of Revelation. They are the following:

First, there is the "Preterist View" which regards the book as referring to its own day, Christianity's struggle with the Roman empire.²⁹ In this struggle Roman will try to

28 A. Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary-Romans-Revelation* (New York: Abington-Cokesbury Press., "n.d."), p. 962.

29 H. H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House., 1927), p. 623.

destroy the church by persecution. This approach has its strength in the fact that when the Revelation is thus understood, it becomes immediately and thoroughly relevant to the life and the struggle of the early church. But it faces embarrassment that many things predicted in the book did not take place in that epoch. The fact is that the prediction of the near downfall of the Roman world power, the graphically drawn picture of the destruction of the imperial city, the accession of a half demonic-tyrant (antichrist) who should soon be destroyed, and the immediate setting up of a millennial reign of the martyrs with Christ on earth, are predictions which history has not verified.³⁰

The preterist method is basically divided into two camps. First, there is the older view of which Moses Stuart of Andover is a representative, held that chapters six through eleven were fulfilled in the "humiliation and prostration of the Jewish persecuting enemies of the Church", and that chapters thirteen through nineteen were mainly in the reign of Nero. All the rest, Stuart held, is merely vaguely intimated, except that chapters twenty-one and twenty-two are definitely future. The modern preterist view originated with the Jesuit Alcasar. He held that chapters four through eleven refer to the conflict with Judaism and that chapters twelve through nineteen refer to a conflict with paganism, while chapters twenty through twenty-two refer to her present triumph and power. The fanciful meaning that is given to the symbols by this system is enough to discredit it, to say nothing if the indications that chapters four through nineteen deal with a relatively short period of time in connection with the second coming of Christ.³¹

The second view held by modern scholars today as to how to interpret the book of Revelation is the "Continuous histori-

30 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

31 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

cal method." This method looks upon Revelation as a forecast, in symbols, of the history of the church. It has been held by non-catholic scholars from a short time before the Reformation. Essentially the theory has been the same since that time; there have been wide differences in detail of interpretation. The system makes the book of Revelation prophesy in detail the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church. A few great names in this school of thought are: Wycliffe, Luther, Bullinger, Brightman, Fox, E. B. Elliot, Albert Barnes, Guinnes, Lord, and Carroll.

Interpreters of this school go into great detail. They compare the symbols of Revelation with the course of history so successfully someone has said that a study of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" along with Barne's "Notes on Revelation" is sufficient proof of the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures!

One is forced to admit, whether this is the true method of interpretation or not, the expositors have fitted the book to history in many places in an admirable way. Occasional hits, however, cannot be regarded as adequate proof of the correctness of a view where there are so many objections to be raised.

The first objection that we consider to this view would be that Revelation understood from this view point, is entirely out of touch with the situation of the Christians for whom it was originally given. We can hardly think that the apostasy of the Catholic church and the reformation would have given much comfort to first century Christians who were being persecuted in Asia Minor. Revelation must be kept close to Asia Minor of the first century if its meaning is to be known.

Secondly, this method places too much importance to the apostasy of the Catholic Church, when there were a great number of other enemies that the church had to fight.

Third, the horizon of this method is too narrow. The events of this book are confined to the confines of countries where Roman Catholicism held its sway, thus, this book could have no meaning for countries who never had this sway of Roman Catholicism.

Apparently this method of interpretation of the book of Revelation has no real strong points except that it avoids a literal interpretation of the book and it foresees a complete over throw of evil.³²

The third method of interpretation held by modern scholarship today would be the method called the "Futurist View". This approach understands the central chapters as setting forth events of the end of time leading up to the return of Christ and intimately connected therewith. There are differences among the futurists, however. Some reason that the summons to John, "Come hither" (4:1), marks the removal of the whole church from the earth (the rapture of the saints). This is often coupled with the idea that the letters to the seven churches depict various stages of church history, so that actually there is no long gap in the book between the apostolic age and the end of time, although events in the world as such are passed by. It is supported by the observation that the word "church" does not appear in the book beyond chapter three, except for the single mention in the Epilogue (22:16). It is thereby concluded that the church will be spared from the experience of passing through the great tribulation with which the central chapters are concerned.

Other futurists have non-dispensational approaches, understanding the summons to John in 4:1 to apply merely to the perspective of the author himself. The heavenly scene of chapters four and five could hardly be applied to that which is

32 Summers, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-38, 41.

of a worldly nature and the seals may refer in part to divine visitations of a more or less extraordinary nature that transpire during the course of the age as a whole (Cf. Matt. 24:6-8). With the mention of the great tribulation of chapter seven, however, the end of time is reached, in agreement with the teaching of Christ in Matthew 24:29, 30.

This general viewpoint of the futurist finds support from the following consideration, well stated by M. C. Tenney: "However one may interpret the symbols, the action of the book leads to and includes the last judgment of earth and the final establishment of the city of God. As the events lead up to this terminus in close succession, one may reason backward and say that the bulk of these events must still be in the future, since the consummation with which they are associated has not yet been attained and since the symbols seem to call for a rapid succession of acts rather than for a protracted process."³³

The fourth and final method of interpretation that we shall consider is that which is called the "Idealist or Spiritual View". The Spiritual interpretation separates the imagery of the book entirely from any reference to historical events, those of John's day or those at the end of time or those intervening, and deems it to be a pictorial representation in highly figurative language of the great principles of divine government applicable to all times.³⁴

The earlier form of this method originated in the allegorical teaching of the Alexandrian Fathers, Clement and Origen. Approaching this book with a strong anti-chilastic bias, they allegorized everything they could not understand and a few things that they did understand. In their day the belief in the millennial kingdom on earth, to follow the second advent of

³³ Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 436, 437.

³⁴ Halley, *loc. cit.*

Christ, was widely diffused; but the Alexandrians were not in sympathy with this belief and held that it was a sign of maturity to proceed from the literal interpretation to a spiritual interpretation. The results of this method were however, very unsatisfactory; for everyone interpreted the symbols and figures in his own way, and so the book conveyed no definite message to the church. Jerome and Augustine adopted this method with certain modifications.

The modern form of this method looks upon the Apocalypse as dealing with the conflict between the church and the forces of evil through the whole dispensation, not giving a divine forecast of specific events, but as indicating great principles which are in conflict. Milligan says: "These successive waves of judgment are obviously successive in thought rather than in time. The book of Revelation is not simply a book which gives the history of either early or mediaeval or last events written of before they happened, but a spring of encouragement and holy joy of Christians of every age. Now while we agree that the Revelation affords encouragement to tried Saints in all periods of the Church's history, we, nevertheless, feel that the advocates of this theory do not go far enough. They largely overlook the fact that the book of Revelation claims to be prophecy (1:3; 10:11; 22:7, 10, 18, 19) and that it points immediately to the second advent (1:7; 3:11; 16:15; 19:7; 22:7, 12, 20).³⁵

In my own estimation I would have to go along with the Preterist view in saying that Revelation definitely had a message to the Saints who were under persecution in the first century, who definitely needed some encouragement in those difficult times. Perhaps there is some of the Historical view in the book but in just what sense and amount would be difficult to understand or measure. Again quite definitely there is something to be said for the Futurist view, seeing

35 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

that Christ has not returned again and men have not faced eternal punishment or reward. Again to me if there are other events of an eschatological nature I would think it very difficult to ascertain them with a reasonable amount of certainty.

Perhaps the next question we must ask ourselves about this book of Revelation would be, what distinguishing marks or characteristics does this book have that seem to stand out as unique to the book itself?

First, it is the Biblical book of the end-time par excellence. This emphasis on the last things is present here and there in various parts of the Old and New Testaments, but not in the same concentrated, sustained, and comprehensive manner as in the Apocalypse.

Second, it is a mysterious book, filled with enigmas for the modern reader. But this does not necessarily mean that it was necessarily so for believers who read it at the end of the first century. Perhaps its message had to be conveyed in symbols and obscure allusions at least in part because of the danger of reprisal by the ruthless Roman regime that was threatening the church with persecution.

Third, it is a polemical book, which challenges the pride and impiety of a ruler who claims divine honor, the crowning infamy of paganism. Over against his boastful claim is put the message of him who is ruler of the kings of the earth (1:5), the King of kings and Lord of lords (19:16).

Fourth, it is a dramatic work. This feature belongs to the nature of the apocalyptic in general, but the artistry here is incomparable.³⁶ In this kind of writing the predictive element is prominent, the symbols often arbitrary and the

³⁶ Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

visions become the vehicles of the message. The symbols are usually left unexplained. The book of Revelation is related to the same type of prophecies in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, as also to the prophetic teaching of Jesus himself. The present day attempt to put it on the same plane as the Book of Enoch, the Apocalypse of Baruch, the Assumption of Moses, the Ascension of Isaiah, and other apocalyptic books, is not only unwarranted on the ground of the contents of the books, but has absolutely no real ground to stand on. These other books are but the conceptions of men; this is a divine revelation given to John.³⁷

Fifth, there is a notable element of interplay between heaven and earth. This is a corollary of the visionary character of the book. Heaven is open to the prophet. What is decreed there comes to pass on earth. Likewise, what transpires on earth, whether it be the suffering of saints or the lawless acts of ungodly men, brings a reaction in heaven. When the judgments of God have finally run their course, heaven stoops to earth in the form of the celestial city.

Sixth, there is an emphasis on the unity and godliness of the nations. The spirit of Babel lives again in them, and the spirit of determined opposition to God and his anointed (cf. Psalm 2). Back of this rebellion against the Most High is the feverish prodding of the evil one, who senses that his time is short.

Seventh, despite its preoccupation with judgment and woe, this book has ample room for worship and praise.

Eighth, there is a prolific use of numbers. This is a common feature of the Apocalyptic. This author especially uses the number seven, which occurs over fifty times.

37 Thiessen, *op. cit.*, pp. 316, 317.

Ninth, large sections of the text are rhythmical in form, sharing this aspect with the Old Testament prophets.

Tenth, there is frequent use of the Old Testament. It is calculated that of the 404 verses of the text of the Revelation, 278 contain references to the Jewish Scriptures. The Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel are drawn on most heavily.

The author may have been acquainted with some of the Jewish apocalypses, but he does not confess dependence on them. Agreement in terminology probably does not point to this work or that, but to a common stock of apocalyptic expressions.

Eleven, irregularities in grammar are more common than anywhere else in the New Testament. What would be an explanation for this? Perhaps some credence may be given, to the view that the irregularities can be explained from the circumstances of the writing, while alone in Patmos, in apparent haste, in the great excitement due to the visions, it involved apocalyptic style, and possibly without careful linguistic details is more tenable to me than Wescott's view than John had not mastered the Greek language and the view of Torrey that Revelation had been written first in Aramaic and that the Greek Revelation was a transcript of it.³⁸

The last vein of thought we will pursue before closing will be the "Theological Thought" found in the book of Revelation. In some manuscripts of the Apocalypse John is designated as "the theologian". True, this term can mean spokesman for deity, especially in a situation where mysteries are involved. But the other meaning occurs also, and if this be accepted as the intent of the church in using the title, some

³⁸ Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 434, 435.

basis should be found for it in the Apocalypse as well as in the other books attributed to John.

First, the doctrine of God is strongly expressed in terms of Creator, Guardian of his people, and Judge. He is the Almighty and keeps a firm hand on the course of history. Swete observes the ties with the Old Testament revelation of God, “the I am of Exodus, the Holy, Holy, Holy of Isaiah, the Lord God of Ezekiel the God of heaven of Daniel”. He is not set forth verbally as the God of love (but see 21:3, 4), which probably is due to the preoccupation with the theme of judgment. His fatherhood is mentioned several times, but only in connection with the Son. His intrinsic excellence and his mighty acts call for universal praise and honor and glory.

Secondly, the Christology is very rich in terms of names and titles and what these connote. Jesus occurs several times alone. Jesus Christ (1:1), Lord Jesus (22:3), Lord Jesus Christ (22:21), are other forms of identification. This one is the Son of God (2:18), and the Word of God.³⁹

The “Logos Doctrine” of the Johannine writings has several interpretations as it is used in John’s gospel, epistles, and Revelation, but the doctrine or idea comes out more clearly in Revelation than in any other early Christian writing. Jesus could be called the Logos or the Word even if He were not in an eternal manner God. But Revelation, the Gospel, and Epistles agree in ascribing this estimate to His person. While angels will not accept worship of themselves (19:10; 22:9), there is no objection when John falls down at the feet of Jesus (1:17). With God and His seven fold Spirit He is the source of grace and peace (1:5). To Him are ascribed the attributes, “the first and the last”, which seem to belong inalienably to God, (1:17; 22:13). Like God He stands not only at the beginning of history but of the created

39 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 438.

world, which is inconceivable without presupposing that He had part in the creation (3:14; cf. John 1:3; Col. 1:15-18). And yet He calls God both His God (2:7; 3:12) and His Father (3:5, 21), and confesses that all that He has was received from His Father (2:27; 1:1; cf. John 3:35; 17:2).⁴⁰

Jesus is repeatedly called the Lamb which serves to memorialize His sacrifice (5:6). Other titles are Amen, the faithful and true witness (3:14), the holy and true one (3:7), the beginning of God's creation (3:14), the first born from the dead (1:5), the living one (1:8), the root and offspring of David (22:16), the bright and morning star (22:16), the Lion of the tribe of Judah (5:5), the King of kings and the Lord of lords (19:16).

No real place is given to Jesus' life on earth. In 12:5 the birth is followed immediately by the ascension. However, his trial and triumph on earth are indicated in 3:21 and specifically his work of redemption from sin (1:5). His resurrection is implied in (1:5, 18) and His return is promised in (1:7) and then is pictured in (19:11 ff.). He possesses the keys of death and Hades (1:18).

As in the Fourth Gospel, subordination to God the Father (3:12) is balanced out by His equality with Him. The later relationship is spelled out in a variety of ways. Both bear the title Alpha and Omega (1:8; 22:13), salvation is ascribed to them both (7:10); the resurrected martyrs are priests to both (20:6); both are worshipped (4: & 5:); they have a throne jointly (22:1, 3); wrath proceeds from both (6:16); they share the kingdom as equals (11:15; 12:10); and both are the temple of the holy city (21:22).

The Holy Spirit appears chiefly in three roles in the book

⁴⁰ T. Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Kregel Publications., 1953), Vol. III. pp. 434, 435.

of Revelation; as one who induces the ecstatic experience of the prophet (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10); as revealer and teacher (2:11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 14:13; 19:10); and as a witness, along with the church, to Christ (22:17; cf. John 15:26, 27).

The allusions to the seven Spirits (1:4; 4:5; 5:6) create difficulty. Are they references to the Holy Spirit? (RSV and NEB do not capitalize). The association with God and Christ in (1:4) looks in that direction.

Fourthly, the realm of evil receives considerable attention in this book. References to the evil one are frequent. He is spoken of as the devil and Satan, the dragon, the ancient serpent (20:2). His opposition to God and His purpose (12:1-6), as well as to the church (3:13, 24), his role as the deceiver of the world (12:9) and the instigator of rebellion against God (20:8), are some of the highlights.

The conflict is of cosmic proportions (12:7), though earth is the chief area. Behind godless government stands the power of Satan (13:2), usurping the worship that men should give to God alone (13:4). But this power is not absolute; his time is measured (12:12) and his doom is certain (20:10).

Fifth, and last, the teaching on the church, while not highly developed, is instructive. Leading elements here are her unity, her control by the risen Son of God (1:13, 16, 20), her militancy as she resists the efforts to destroy her loyalty to Christ and silence her testimony, and her ultimate triumph in glory. The universal priesthood of believers serves to bind the churches together and gives them strength to endure.⁴¹

Thus, the Apocalypse supplies the finishing touch to the whole panorama of Biblical history. Eden's tragedy is in the

41 Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 438-440.

background, but it is swallowed up in victory. The great deceiver is banished, the curse is gone, men have access to the tree of life, the garden gives way to the celestial city, spacious enough for all of the redeemed. Here we glimpse in the city of God the vindication of the ways of the Almighty, and man's eternal bliss. Nothing could better serve as the church's chart and compass through days of stress and strain. Nothing could better supply healing for her wounds or kindle perennially her hope in the living God.⁴²

42 *Ibid.*, pp. 448, 449.

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

“NOW the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and the such like: of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law”. (Galatians 5:19-23).

In the last half of the fifth chapter of Galatians the apostle Paul tells the brethren there that their liberty in Christ is not to be perverted in licentiousness, but is to be maintained through walking by the Spirit and crucifying the flesh. Paul as we can see above contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit, telling the Galatian brethren that if they want to enter the kingdom of God, they will have to put away those fleshly lusts which were “manifest” in their lives. Then Paul went on to tell them that the fruits of the Spirit had to characterize their lives for against such there was no law. Paul went on to say in verse 24 that those who had lives characterized by fruits of the Spirit were Christ’s because they had crucified the flesh and its lusts.

The above fruits of the Spirit, which enabled the Galatians to walk in the Spirit and to become Christ’s that they might enter into the kingdom of God, were a must for their lives and for ours today. Therefore, we will begin an exegesis of these fruits of the Spirit that we might come to a better understanding of what relevancy they had to the Galatians then and to the church today.

For man since the garden of Eden has been able to change his world but not himself. Thus, the sins that beset the early

Galatian churches are still troubling our churches today.

In verse twenty-two of chapter five Paul discusses the “fruits fo the Spirit”. The term “fruit” or “karpos” as used in the original language means, “that which originates or comes from something; an effect or result”.¹ Arndt and Gingrich in their lexicon define “karpos” as a product or an outcome.² Thus, the Holy Spirit, said Paul, produces fruit by so ruling in and controlling man that it subdues and holds in restraint all the evil passions and lusts that dwell in the flesh and it develops into activity and life the germs of the spiritual life in man. There are in every man spiritual germs and capabilities of all these virtues and excellencies listed as fruits of the Spirit. Because of sin they lie dormant until through Christ, the Spirit of God turns them into life and activity. Then they grow and bear fruit in life and fit the character for companionship with God.³

These fruits are what the Holy Spirit grants to all who live by the word He inspired. Certainly, Paul wanted to emphasize that human responsibility is not eliminated though they be “fruits of the Spirit”.

This is further supported by what Jesus earlier had to say about “fruit bearing” in Mt. 5:16-20; Jno. 15:1-11.

Thus, as Jesus and His other apostles, Paul uses the familiar figure of fruit bearing to plainly teach the Galatians they are to walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

The first aspect of the fruit of the Spirit mentioned by Paul

1 H. J. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Publishing House., 1905), p. 326.

2 W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press., 1952), p. 405.

3 D. L. Lipscomb, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia* (Nashville, Tenn: Gospel Advocate Company., 1962), p. 270.

in verse twenty-two is “love”. The Bible not only speaks of the love of God but also of the love of the Spirit (Rom. 15:30). Since God is love (I Jno. 4:8, 16), the Spirit also shares in the nature of love. The Spirit is the one through whom by the means of God’s word, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

Paul did not specify as to whether he had reference to the love for God or for man. There is no need to suggest that he is making a distinction, because love for God is essential to our love of man. “We love, because He first loved us”. (I Jno. 4:19). However, we cannot truly love God if we do not also have love for our brethren (I Jno. 4:20, 21). The love of the children of God is tied in with our love for God and the keeping of God’s commandments (I Jno. 5:2, 3).

The love of which the Bible speaks is rooted in us and not the object of our love. We love not because the person is lovely; but because as children of God we want to be like God, who is love and because we are commanded to love (I Jno. 3:6); not because it was lovely but because God is love.⁴

Thus, Paul says the fruit of the Spirit is love. The Greek term “agape” is used here in verse twenty-two. “Agape” as used here is a noun. It is found in the Septuagint nineteen times. But it first comes into habitual use in Christian writings. In the New Testament it is partially the only noun for love, although compound nouns expressing peculiar phases of love, such as brotherly love, love of money, or love for children, are formed with “philos”. Both verbs “philein” and “agapan” occur but “agapa” is used more frequently.⁵

“Agape” though in itself capable of denoting the adora-

-
- 4 J. D. Bales, *The Holy Spirit and The Christian* (Shreveport, La: G. Lambert Publications., 1966), pp. 83, 84.
- 5 M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946) Vol. IV, pp. 167–168.

tion of God, is perhaps to be taken here in accord with Paul's general usage of "Agape" as referring to "that love of man for man, which resting upon this value is characterized by desire to benefit. This love of man for man is brought out earlier in verse fourteen when he uses "Agape" to say, "... thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself".⁶

Perhaps the classical illustration of Paul's use of "agape" all the way through I Corinthians 13:4-7, pointing to the love of man for man, when he said, "Love SUFFERETH long, and is KIND; love ENVIETH not; love VAUNTETH not itself, is not PUFFED UP. Do not behave itself UNSEEMLY, seeketh not her own, is not easily PROVOKED, THINKETH no EVIL; rejoicieth not in INIQUITY, but rejoicieth in the TRUTH; BEARETH ALL THINGS, BELIEVETH ALL THINGS, HOPETH ALL THINGS, ENDURETH ALL THINGS."

Thus, if the Galatian brethren were filled with "Agape" for their own brethren, which is necessary according to the apostle John who said in I Jno. 4:20, "... for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen. This is the kind of love in their hearts would cause them to stop being guilty of the works of the flesh which characterized their relationship with their brethren and their fellowman.

Thus Christian "agape", whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself upon those with whom some close relationship is sustained. Paul's love here seeks the welfare of all, (Rom. 15:2), and works no ill towards anyone (I Cor. 13:8-10); love seeks opportunity to do good to all men, and

6 E. D. Burton, *The International Critical Commentary on Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark., 1956), p. 314.

especially toward them of the household of faith.⁷ (Gal. 6:10).

The many schisms in the church today could in many cases be solved if the brethren on both sides of the issues had the kind of love listed by Paul as a fruit of the Spirit. The same principle holds true in my judgment with our religious friends in the denominational world. Perhaps this kind of love could melt away much of the hatred, strife, and contention between us!

The second fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-two is that of "Joy". The word "joy" in the original Greek language is "chara". "Chara" can not only mean joy but also carried with it the idea of "gladness".⁸ "Chara" is found about fifty times in the Septuagint and in the Apocrypha and refers most frequently to a joy that has a religious basis, grounded in conscious relationship to God.⁹

As previously stated the word "chara" carries with it "joy on a religious basis". Joy over God's love manifested in the salvation offered through Christ. It is a joy over the reconciliation of God and man. It is a joy to be manifest because of being received as children to God.¹⁰

Paul certainly had this fruit of the Spirit for his writings are full of his joy. In Phil 4:4 for example, Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice". In I Thes. 5:6, Paul said, "Rejoice evermore". Certainly Paul had much to say about joy in his epistles. Thus, to the Galatian brethren who were walking by the Spirit the fruit of joy will be made manifest in their lives and with this fruit in their lives again

7 Bales, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

8 Thayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 664-665.

9 Burton, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

10 H. N. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 207.

there could be no place for the works of the flesh.

Paul stated that “the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and ‘joy’ in the Holy Spirit”. (Rom. 14:7). To the Thessalonians he said, “and ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with the ‘joy’ of the Holy Spirit”. (I Thes. 1:6).

There are some who have such a distorted view of the Christian life that they think that if one enjoys anything it must be fattening, expensive, or sinful. Because we are conscious of God’s love in our hearts and because we have love in our hearts for others, we also have great joy. We are confident of the blessings which come to us here and now of the ultimate triumph in Christ. We have sources of joy that are not rooted in the material and physical. Since our joy is rooted in Christ and not in the changing circumstances to this life, we have the source of joy that the world cannot really know; and which the world cannot take away. Although the Christian is not always on the mountain peaks of joy and finds himself many times in the valley of sorrow, yet there is still a source of joy in his heart for he knows that Christ is with him in his sorrows and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord (Rom. 8:28).

It is quite “manifest” in the lives of many Christians that “joy” is not part of their lives. If it was they would be begging for more and more work to do for Christ who has done so much for them!

The third fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-two is that of “peace”. The original Greek word “peace” here is “eirene”. The word “eirene” carried with it the idea of “striving towards peace”.¹¹

11 Arndt and Gingrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 226–227.

Thayer defines "eirene" as "peace between individuals, harmony, and concord".¹² Burton's commentary on Galatians defines "eirene" as "tranquility of mind, based on the consciousness of a right relationship with God".¹³

Lenski says of "eirene" that it is "the Hebrew Shalom in that the condition of well being when God is our friend and all is well with us fills our lives. The condition of peace is objective, the peace established by God through Christ, but it produces also the corresponding subjective realization of peace to the rest, satisfaction, and happiness that flows from the possession of peace."¹⁴

The term "eirene" seems to stand in contrast with those sins of strife and malignity noted before among the works of the flesh and therefore to point to peacefulness in the Christian community.¹⁵

In my judgment, based upon the prior exegesis, the term "peace" could carry with it a number of definitions fitted to stand with the other fruits. Certainly the context shows that it is speaking of harmony between individuals. Then of course there would be the subjective peace brought about by a knowledge that all is well between a man and his God.

We can certainly see how much emphasis Jesus put on peace by turning to the scriptures. Although evil men oppose His message of righteousness Jesus came to bring peace with God. (Mk. 5:34; 9:50; Lk. 1:79; 2:14; 24:36). He preached peace (Acts 10:36; Eph. 5:15). He gave peace to his

12 Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

13 Burton, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

14 R. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press., 1946), p. 27.

15 H. M. Spence and J. S. Excell, *Pulpit Commentary on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Mich: Eerdmans Publishing House., 1950), p. 262.

disciples (Jno. 14:27). Christ Himself is our peace (Eph. 2:14, 15). He reconciles us to God and brings peace between those who are reconciled to God. God is the God of peace (Rom. 15:33; 16:20). Peace is a gift of Jesus Christ (Jno. 16:33). Through Him we have peace with God (Rom. 5:1). This peace of God passeth all understanding and it guards our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

Of course neither Jesus nor Paul had in mind peace at any cost. We are not to come to terms with sin and error in our lives. We are not to refuse to oppose error because we are afraid that peace will be disturbed. We are concerned about purity of life and teaching and not just about peace. James said, "But wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace".¹⁶ (Jas. 3:17-18).

Again the division among our own brethren today "manifests" a lack of "peace" that should be characteristic of those today who are trying to live by the Spirit's teachings. It also represents a lack of belief in what Jesus said in Mt. 5:9, when he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God".

The fourth fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-two is that of "longsuffering". The word in the original language is "makrothumia" meaning "patience, forbearance, longsuffering, and slowness in avenging wrongs".¹⁷

The term "makrothumia" occurs rarely in non-Biblical literature but is used five times in the Septuagint and the Apocrypha. It usually carries the same general meaning of,

¹⁶ Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

¹⁷ Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

“steadfastness of the soul under provocation to change.” In this present verse and context the word “makrothumia” is probably, in accordance with Paul’s usual usage and context, to be taken as forbearance towards men whose conduct is calculated to provoke anger.¹⁸

Again this term “longsuffering” seems to stand in direct contrast with such words of the flesh as hatred, wrath, and strife. The longsuffering leads the Christian to bear with the mistakes and wrongs that grow out of weakness and the evil designs of others.

Lightfoot observed that longsuffering is the “patient endurance under injuries inflicted by others”. Meyer suggested it is through longsuffering that “with holding the assertion of our own rights, we are patient under injuries, in order to bring the one who injures us to reflection and amendment”. it is forbearance in the presence of provocation. Longsuffering expresses God’s godness and forbearance as He endures the sinners persistent obstinacy and wickedness and tirelessly calls him to repentance rather than to visit him with immediate judgment. (Rom. 2:4; 9:22).

Longsuffering is also vitally related to forgiveness. Peter may have thought he was being very longsuffering when he said, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? until seven times?” (Mt. 18:21). This seems like a great deal. And, yet, our Lord showed that when he had forgiven him seven times that he was just starting down the road of mercy when He said that Peter should forgive his brother seventy times seven!

When we stop and think of how often God has forgiven us and how often we both need and want forgiveness, then we

18 Burton, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

can better understand that we must be longsuffering with others.

Parental love might help us to better understand this matter of longsuffering. Does a parent cut the child off for one mistake? Do they disown them when they sin against the parents twenty times? Or do they continue to try and reach the child as long as they are able? If the child is finally cut off it is not because the parents do not love the child, but because the child withdraws itself from that love and chose to live without the love of the parents.¹⁹ I close this discussion of "longsuffering" with the words of Jesus which perhaps epitomize all that any one can say on this subject. Jesus in Mt. 5:10-12 said, "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you."

The fifth fruit of the Spirit listed in verse twenty-two is that of "gentleness". In the original language the word is "chrestotes". "Chrestotes" means, "benignity and kindness".²⁰ It also carried with it the idea of "goodness, kindness, and generosity that man shows to man."²¹ In the Septuagint the word "chrestotes" is translated with the word, "goodness, prosperity, but most frequently "kindness". This definition of "kindness" seems to also be the constant meaning in the New Testament word "gentleness".²²

Paul in Col. 3:12 tells the church there that they as the

19 Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

20 Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 672.

21 Arndt and Gingrich, *op. cit.*, p. 894.

22 Burton, *op. cit.*, pp. 315-316.

elect of God are to put on "kindness" or "gentleness". Again Paul tells the Corinthian church of their need of "kindness" in relation to their salvation in II Cor. 6:6. Again we cannot help pointing out with this fruit of the Spirit the great **contrast to Paul's listing of the works of the flesh**. To be gentle before and toward all, to return good for evil is what Paul has in mind here. Kindness looks to the benefits conferred, seeking to make it as full and large as possible.

I like the statement by Bales on the word "gentleness" who said that "gentleness is goodness of heart, or kindness. To be kind is to be friendly, loving and generous. It is a kindly disposition towards one's neighbors, not necessarily always taking a practical form, but as a general attitude which of course, expresses itself in practical applications in life."²³

Truly, we are not living in a gentle age. We live in an age of violence, crime, and hatred and it seems to me that more than ever before Christians can let their light shine for Christ by living gentle lives that men may see them and glorify our Father in heaven. One good way to manifest "gentleness" or "kindness" among the brethren seems to be pointed out by Paul in chapter 6:1,2 when he said, "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of 'gentleness', looking to thyself, lest also thou be tempted, bear ye one another's burdends, and so fulfilled the law of Christ".

The next fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul found in verse twenty-two is that of "goodness". "Goodness" in the original language is "agathosune", meaning "kindness and beneficence".²⁴ "Agathogune" appears first in the Septuagint signifying "goodness, righteousness, prosperity, and kindness". In the New Testament it occurs only in Paul's

²³ Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

²⁴ Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

epistles and always apparently in the general sense, “goodness”. Using this term “agathosune” the word refers less distinctly to conduct towards others.²⁵

In my judgment Lenski has in mind what Paul meant in using the term “goodness” when Lenski said that it, “points to the bestowal upon others of what is good and beneficent.” It is “goodness” not as merely moral excellence but “good-house” doing good to others.²⁶

Lipscomb in his commentary also gives us another shade of meaning which must be taken into consideration. He says, “it may be, however, that this includes the sterner qualities of doing good for and to others, but not by gentle means. As an illustration of this we find Jesus when He drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple. (Mt. 21:12, 13).²⁷

Vine in his work says of goodness, “the parts and of goodness, are many.” If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world and that his heart is no island, cut off from other lands, but a continent, that joins to them. If he be compassionate towards others, it shows he has a heart that is like a noble tree, that is wounded itself, when it gives the balm. If he easily pardons and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be hurt. If he be thankful for small benefits, it shows that he weighs man’s mind. But above all, if he have Paul’s perfection that he would wish to be “anathema” from Christ, for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature and kind of conformity with Christ himself.²⁸

As I see it Lenski, Lipscomb, and Vine have in their different shades the summation of what Paul had in mind when he

25 Burton, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

26 Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

27 Lipscomb, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

28 Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

used the term "goodness" as one of the fruits of the Spirit that the Galatian brethren and we today must possess to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The last fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-two is that of "faithfulness". The word in the original language is "pistis". It means, "faithfulness and reliability."²⁹

"Pistis" is evidently not employed here as in chapter three, denoting an attitude towards truth nor as in chapter five, verse six, "to signify the acceptance of the gospel concerning Jesus. The term "pistis" as used here is spoken of as a product of the Holy Spirit in the human soul. It is therefore, either "faithfulness" and "fidelity" as in Mt. 23:23; Rom. 3:3; and Titus 2:10, or "faith" in the specific form of belief in the power and willingness of God to work through men, as in Rom. 12:3; I Cor. 12:9, 13:2. But since the other words in this group refer to matters of distinctly ethical and religious character and there is nothing in the context to suggest a reference to that specific form of faith that enables one to work miracles. Thus, it is practically certain that "pistis" here means "faithfulness", "fidelity", and especially in relation to one's fellow men.³⁰

Lenski in his commentary on Galatians and Nicoll in the Expositor's Greek Testament seems to hold to the same view towards defining the word "pistis" that has just been quoted from Burton's International Critical Commentary.

In my judgment with the preponderance of evidence and the context I will have to agree with Burton's definition of "pistis". This definition would indicate to me that the Galatian brethren and we today would then have our faith a

²⁹ Arndt and Gingrich, *op. cit.*, p. 668.

³⁰ Burton, *loc. cit.*, p. 316.

trustfulness in our dealings with our fellowmen, in opposition to the suspicion and distrust that must have existed then and among us today as we look at the works of the flesh listed by Paul.

Thus, faith in God not merely includes faith in his existence, but also confidence that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him (Heb. 11:6). It involves the conviction that God is able to carry out his promises (Rom. 4:20, 21). Faithfulness involves integrity wherein one keeps his words or is loyal to his principles. It is required that a steward be found faithful (I Cor. 4:2). We as Christians are stewards for we have been intrusted with that which belongs to another. Our life, our hope, and the gospel, we owe to God. All that we are and hope to be, comes from him. There will come a day when He will ask us to render an account of our stewardship. Thus, it behooves us to see our time, talents, money, education, and opportunities as servants of God who seek God's glory and man's good.³¹

The eighth fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-three is that of "meekness". In the Greek language the word for "meekness" is "prautes". "Prautes", carries with it the meaning of, "gentleness or meekness"³² It may also mean "mildness".³³

The word "prautes" has a long history. It is used by Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, and Plutarch. It signified "mildness and gentleness in dealings with others". In the Septuagint it usually means, "one who is humble in disposition and character, one who is submissive under the divine will", rather than as the English translation "meek" might suggest, "submitting without resistance to the wrongs of men."

31 Bales, *loc. cit.*, p. 94.

32 Abbott Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark., 1950), p. 377.

33 Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 535.

In the New Testament period the word was probably used in two senses. Negatively, being the opposite of the arrogant, self asserting spirit; positively, recognition of others: towards God, submissiveness, towards men conateness and gentleness.³⁴

Lenski in his commentary points out the term “meekness” as used here refers to a quality which Christians have that whatever we are wronged or abused we shall show no resentment by threatening vengeance. The opposite of “meekness” is to be arrogant, vehement, bitter, wild, and violent.³⁵

Of course the greatest example of “meekness” is found in the life of Jesus. Jesus in His sermon on the Mount, said in Mt. 5:5, “Blessed are the “meek” for they shall inherit the earth”. Later on in this same book he describes Himself in Mt. 11:28, 29. “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, for I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am “meek” and “lowly of heart” and ye shall find rest unto your souls”. If we are to be more like Jesus, we will then strive to be like Jesus and we will take His yoke and learn of Him. Paul, I am convinced, had in mind for the Galatian brethren to do this very thing in putting on “meekness” that they be not guilty of such works of the flesh as, variance, wrath, strife, murderers, and revellings which he had warned them about.

Meekness is not weakness. The meek soul is not timid, cowering, or a cringing coward. Moses was meek (Num. 12:3), and Jesus was also meek (Mt. 11:29). Meekness is gentleness, but it is more than gentleness. It is “strength under control”. It is not just self controlled but “God controlled”.

Meekness is also vitally related to our treatment of our

34 Burton, *loc. cit.*, p. 317.

35 Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

fellowmen. The meek man is not quick tempered nor vindictive, because swayed by feelings of benevolence and love, he remains the master of himself. Love keeps the upper-hand and imposes calmness and self restraint.³⁶

The last fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul in verse twenty-three is that of "temperance". In the original language the word for "temperance" is "egkpateia". "Egkpateia" means literally, "dominion which one has over oneself or something in the sense that one may or may not have it, that one can bear it, that one thus, controls it".³⁷

"Egkpateia", the last of the fruits of the Spirit listed in verse twenty-three is neither Godward nor manward, but is more properly selfward. It is usually employed to describe self-control in sexual matters. If this is its meaning here then it refers to such works of the flesh as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness as mentioned in verse nineteen.

It is not only that Paul wants to heighten the contrast by listing the vices and virtues but if there was a "libertine" party at Galatia, boasting of their "freedom", they sorely needed this fruit of the Spirit.³⁸

Undoubtedly, Paul's use here of "temperance" in relation to the sexual appetite is valid, but I think that its meaning is broader than this. I agree with the Expositor's Greek New Testament which states that "Egkpateia" or self-control "comprehends every form of temperance and

36 Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

37 G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. 340.

38 R. A. Cole, *Tyndale Commentary – The Epistle of Paul to Galatia* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), p. 168.

includes the mastery of all appetites, tempers, and passions.³⁹

The Galatians had to control these appetites which Paul said in verse nineteen were “manifest”. They were being seen and were known to those both inside and outside the churches of Galatia.

Self-control of “temperance” is the opposite of “intemperance”. The person who has self-control is “temperate”. He is unlike Felix who had good cause to tremble when Paul “reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and judgment to come” (Acts 24:25). The one who participates in athletic contests, if he is really serious, will exercise self-control. There may be others who are careless as to what they eat, as to whether or not they get enough sleep, or as to whether or not they keep in shape; but “every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore, so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it under subjection: lest by any means, after I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected” (I Cor. 9:25-27).

This temperance is not only a rational restraint of natural impulses but it is, in fact, “the restraint by the mind which has been instructed by the will of the Spirit”. In fact, the self-control to be exercised by the Christian is the result of surrender of his life to Christ. As Paul said, “For the love of Christ constraineth us; . . .”

These then are the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit. They are a very practical test of whether the Spirit dwells in us. And if we bear this fruit of the Spirit, we shall bear much

39 W. R. Nicoll, *The Expositor's Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), p. 188.

fruit of Christ in this world. And Christ, we must remember, wants us to be fruit trees and not merely ornamental trees or shade trees. The Christian's life should be the life adorned with the virtues set forth in the Bible and we should provide shade for wearied souls; but we must serve more purposes than these. We must be fruit trees and as such we are both an ornament and shade.⁴⁰

Many people today who claim to be Christians but are not walking with the Spirit. For they have no temperance or any of the other fruits of the Spirit and like those in the early churches of Galatia it is quite "manifest" to those both inside and outside the church and it is bringing shame and reproach on the Lord and His church.

These then are the fruits that the Spirit gives to those who permit themselves to be guided by Him. But it is true also that the law does not turn against such. The anti-thesis, law-gospel, still lurks in the background. The "against" expresses the fact that the law constitutes a threat to man. It only "subjects" man to itself, making of him a slave, but also takes the position against him. The reference presumably is to the cause, the spoliation, which the law brings on the disobedient (Gal. 3:10, 13). Hence, the law is not against those who walk by the Spirit because they in principle are fulfilling the law. In this again it is evident that the requirement and strength of the law continue. But the fulfillment of the law is guaranteed now, in Christ, by the Spirit. Hence, that takes place, when that, which was impossible for man and for the law and the threat of the law, is lifted.⁴¹

There were men during the days of the early church in Galatia, and there are men today in the world and perhaps in the church, who would try to keep faithful Christians from

⁴⁰ Bales, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

⁴¹ Ridderbos, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

bearing the fruit of the Spirit; and yet even these men or women would usually like for us to bear such fruit in our relationships with them! The flesh, of course, is against the fruit of the Spirit; “for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to another” (Gal. 5:17).

God’s law, however, is not against such fruit. In fact the law of the Spirit produces such fruit. A man named H. B. Swete observed: “Law as a prohibitory or condemning power has no existence where they are found”.

Those who have these fruits are living a life of obedience which does not abide in disobedience to the law of God. There is in Romans 8:1-4 a few words of Paul to the Roman church which have some important things to say concerning those who walk in the Spirit, “There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit”. These individuals, since they do not walk after the flesh but after the Spirit, are not carnal minded, which involves death, but are spiritual minded, which involves life and peace, for Paul said in Romans 8:6, “For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace”.⁴²

Another set of verses which definitely indicate that fruit bearing is in accordance with the plan of God and perhaps it is the classical set of scriptures is that spoken by Jesus in John 15:1-8, “I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman.

42 Bales, *loc. cit.*, p. 96.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth not fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men shall gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burned. If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. **HEREIN IS MY FATHER GLORIFIED, THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT: SO SHALL YE BE MY DISCIPLES.**” What could be more clearer that these graphic words of Christ concerning the need for bearing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

I think it appropriate to close this article with some remarks on Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become unto him a well of water springing up unto life eternal” (Jno. 4:14). Later Jesus promised that He would give the Spirit who would bless others through believers in Christ. He made this statement on the last day, the great day of the Feast of the Tabernacles in John 7. There are many commentators who think that this statement was made when the priests “. . . at the time of the morning sacrifice . . . brought into the forecourt, in a golden vessel, water from the springs of Siloah, which arises within the mount on which the temple stood and poured it, mingled with sacrificial wine, into two bowls which stood upon the altar, and in which there was an opening by which it made its escape. During the performance of this rite, the priests caused trumpets and cymbals to be sounded, and the words of Isaiah 12:3, were sung : “With joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation”. Many have ascribed this

as a special reference to the Messiah by the prophet which is rightly so.

Jesus spoke of the Spirit “which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified” (Jno. 7:39). The Spirit was given in a miraculous way on Pentecost after Jesus went to the Father (Jno. 16:7-14; Acts 2:1-4, 33). From the miraculous reception of the Spirit, which guided the apostles and prophets to all truth, we today are blessed by that ever flowing stream of water from the living word of God. Furthermore, Christians on Pentecost were promised that “gift of the Spirit” (Acts 2:38). We are as we have discussed to bring forth fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). As we bear the moral and spiritual qualities in our life and as we impart the teaching of the Spirit in His word, we become a source of living waters unto others. Thus, not only to benefit from the Spirit and his word in our hearts, but others also. He who drinks of the Spiritual Rock becomes in turn a rock from within which the waters flow to slacken the thirst of others.

Jesus had reference to the reception of the Spirit through faith (Jno. 7:38, 39). In this passage Jesus did not say in what sense the Spirit would dwell in them, but He did show that it was through receiving Him in faith. Our faithful lives are to be channels through which blessings flow into the lives of others as we by the word and deed communicate faith to others.⁴³

In conclusion, I would say that Paul had in mind for the early churches of Galatia and for us today to keep in mind that our bodies are the “temples of the Holy Spirit”, and that our lives should manifest those qualities which are in harmony with His will. In other words, we should bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. This does not mean that we shall

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

achieve perfection. It takes time for a plant to grow and it takes time for the plant to bear fruit. We are not spiritually reborn as full grown adults into the family of God.

I close with the words of Paul in Romans 8:12-14, "So then, brethren we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God".

METHODS OF EVANGELISM

THE purpose of this lesson is to discover and define the main methods of evangelism in the New Testament. Others in churches of Christ, such as Phil Elkins in his book *Toward A More Effective Mission Work* and J. C. Choate in his book *Mission Studies*, stress the need of a knowledge of the methods of evangelism in New Testament times, as essential to successful world evangelism in our own generation. This knowledge will be needed in every generation because God's people must teach the world about Christ until he comes again (Mt. 24:14).

The word *methods* is used to mean, "the orderly, logical, and effective procedure or process". S. M. Zwemer in his work *Into All The World* defines the word *method* "as to follow the road or the well beaten path".

The word *evangelism* in this sermon is used as it relates to euangelizo, which means "an evangelist or a messenger of good". This term shall also be used in light of euangelizo meaning, "to announce a divine message of salvation, the Messianic proclamation". In this book of religious terms Donald T. Kauffman defines evangelism as follows: "Evangelism is the proclaiming of the good news of Jesus Christ with the intention of winning disciples for him and for the church". Harold Lindsell in an article dealing with the Biblical basis for missions and evangelism says, "Evangelism is to preach the gospel and bring men to a decision where they are to place their faith in Jesus Christ for justification and regeneration".

The phrase, *New Testament Church*, is used to refer to the body of penitent, baptized, believers, who have been called out of the world by the gospel and who follow the New Testament pattern of the church. Henry E. Speck, Jr., in his book on church education defines the *New Testament Church*

as follows: "The word church is used to mean a local congregation of Christians, organized after the New Testament pattern of worship of God and service for humanity". Merrill F. Unger defines the word church as, "The whole number of regenerated persons, specifically from Pentecost to the first resurrection, united organically to one another and to Christ by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit". Mr. Unger.

I am interested in this study of the main methods of evangelism in New Testament times because I want to do mission work at some time in my life. Many years of Bible study on the undergraduate and graduate level have led this author to conclude that there are main methods of evangelism in the Bible, and that if churches of Christ are to evangelize the world, they must be understood and applied. The value in this study is to be seen in the isolation of definite methods of evangelism that were used successfully in the first century. These methods can and should be used as guidelines for Christians in every age.

This study is based on the assumption that there were definite, predominate methods used to evangelize the world in New Testament times. The assumption is also made that the Bible reveals all the methods of evangelism the twentieth-century church needs today.

Successful world evangelism will come about only when the main methods of New Testament evangelism are applied. This hypothesis has been in local work where I have served as minister. We applied the following methods: public and private teaching, evangelization through writing, prayer, Christian living, and through the training of converts. These methods were decided upon through a study of God's word and extra-Biblical sources that dealt with methods of New Testament evangelism. Other methods of evangelism such as miracles and the writing of epistles to other churches can no longer be practiced because it is assumed that miracles are

no longer a part of New Testament Christianity, and it is assumed that no one can write with Apostolic authority today. These methods are expected to produce a good harvest of souls for Christ.

A brief discussion of the principles of evangelism must be considered as necessary to help understand the main methods of evangelism in New Testament times. W.O. Carver in his book *Missions In The Plan Of The Ages* states that Paul preached where the gospel had never been heard before. In other words, he went to virgin soil with the gospel. Paul in Rom. 15:20 said, "Yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build on another man's foundation". Paul chose strategic points for his work. The Bible seems to indicate that he thought in terms of provinces rather than cities. He apparently wanted to work in areas of Roman administration, Greek civilization, and where Jewish influence was strong. Capital cities of provinces were generally used by Paul as places to evangelize. Paul must have had in mind the fact that the Roman roads and commerce would bring into these areas a great number of people from all over the empire that could be used to spread Christianity to their own areas after their conversion.

Another principle which guided the early Christians in the evangelization of the world was to labor where results could be gained. These Christians were aware that they were to get results or make disciples. They did not long remain where they were not converting souls to Christ. When the non-receptive Jews made trouble for Paul and Barnabas in Antioch of Pisidia, Luke wrote in Acts 13:51, "But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came to Iconium".

Now with these remarks in mind, let us turn to the specific methods used in New Testament evangelism. First, Paul chose a province and some specific cities in it, as I mentioned earlier. Once these were evangelized, Paul moved on.

The Bible reveals that he spent no longer than three years in any one place (Ephesus). He taught them to be self supporting congregations. He taught them to evangelize their own area. Each church was to be a center for the spreading of the gospel. Paul did not find a place for Christians to meet while in these cities. He did not help them build meeting places. He did not help provide support for the local preacher. He did not send young men back home to be trained. He trained his converts where they were (II Tim. 2:2).

The second method used in New Testament times for the evangelization of the world was the public proclamation of the word. This was done at the command of Jesus, who said in Mark 16:15, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature". Jesus told the apostles in Acts 1:8 that they were to be his witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. They began to fulfill this commandment. Acts 4:33 says, "And with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all". They taught in the synagogues, temples, market-places, streets, and anywhere they could get an audience. They went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 5:43, 8:4, 17:17-18).

A third method of evangelism used in the New Testament was that of teaching from house to house. "And every day in the temple and from house to house, they ceased not to preach and teach that Jesus was the Christ". (Acts 5:42). Acts 20:20 says, "How I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publically and from house to house". Teaching in the homes was done for a number of reasons. We should remember that the need for private teaching and the importance of the individual played an important role here. Also note the fact that Christians often met and worshipped together in the home, seeing that there were no church buildings in the early centuries.

A fourth method of evangelism as seen from the New Testament is seen in the use of miracles. In Acts 5:12 we read, "And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people: and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch". The results of these wonders and signs is seen in verse fourteen in the same chapter. "And believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes of both men and women". The effect of the miracles and signs is seen in the conversion of Simon. Acts 8:13 says, "And Simon also believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; beholding the signs and great miracles wrought and he was amazed". Though men were not converted by miracles, they were attracted by them to men who preached the gospel. Men are saved by the gospel only (Rom. 1:16, I Cor. 1:21).

A fifth method employed in the New Testament was the use of writing epistles to the churches. In our Bible are powerful messages to churches throughout Europe and Asia minor. Paul also wrote letters to individuals like Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Letters to the church at large were written. First and Second Peter are examples of this. We have evidence of other letters being written. These letters are not a part of the New Testament. For example consider Col. 4:16 which says, "And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans and that ye read the epistle from Laodicea."

A sixth method of evangelism used was that of living a faithful Christian life. Christians put their faith to work and used their opportunities wisely. Jesus said in Mt. 5:16, "Even so, let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven". That men were expected to obey this teaching can be seen in Phil. 2:15 which says, "that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world". Paul declared, "for ye were

once darkness, but now light in the world: walk as children of light.”(Eph. 5:5). Christians like Paul were willing to give up their lives of Christ. In Acts 20:24, Paul said, “But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Finally, through revisitation of churches founded by Paul and his missionary companions, churches in their infancy were strengthened and nourished so as to insure proper spiritual growth. An example of this method is found in Acts 14:21-22, “And when they preached the gospel in that city, and had made many disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.” Paul’s interest in confirming the souls of the disciples is seen in Acts 15:36, “And after some days, Paul said unto Barnabas, let us return now and visit the brethren in every city, wherein we have proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare.” Then in verse forty-one we are told that Paul went throughout Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

In summation, the main methods of evangelism in the New Testament were as follows: public teaching, teaching from house to house, the use of miracles to attract attention to the preaching of the gospel of Christ, the writing of epistles to the churches, the living of the Christian life, the revisitation of new churches, and finally choosing a province and evangelizing its key cities, never staying any longer than three years.

If these methods were applied today, preaching the gospel to our world in this generation would become a reality. The restoration of New Testament evangelism is applying again the age old Bible principles found in Acts of the Apostles.

DOES GOD EXIST?

THE church of our Lord today is facing many challenges from the “atheistic” twentieth century in which we live. Atheism like the thousands of other “isms” is eating away at the vitals of New Testament Christianity. Christians cannot fight the good fight of faith and win souls for Christ unless we know our enemies and their weaknesses. Therefore, as soldiers in the army of Christ, we fight daily the great battle that is raging for the mind and thus, the soul, in the fierce struggle being waged between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God.

We must shine the light of God’s evidences into the lives of the many who have been deceived by the cunning speech and false doctrines of Atheism, that men’s souls may see the great truths that proclaim God’s existence. The Godhead of our salvation have given us many evidences to use to destroy the mighty monster of atheism that lies in the shadows to prey upon the minds of the lost.

Certainly, one of the great evidences that God has given man in His creation to act as an ever lasting witness to the fact that God lives.

Paul, in severely rebuking the Gentiles in Romans 1:18-20, said, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse”.

This passage very plainly teaches that through God’s creation man has had concrete proof of the existence of God.

Though man had not the power to discern the invisible attributes and the power of the Godhead, he can discern the things which God has made in creation.

One of the major reasons for belief in God is that the existence of the universe demands a cause. This is what is called the "cosmological argument". A cause is needed to explain the source of things inanimate. The existence of the sun, moon, planets, and stars implies a cause. The fact that something exists shows that a cause exists.

Reason rejects the idea that a house happened without a cause. Compelling and incontestable is the thought that, seen or unseen, somebody built every house. Similarly, compelling and constestable is the thought, being perceived by the things that are made, the nature's house of inanimate things had a cause greater than itself. The magnitude of nature's house of inanimate things, stretched through billions of space miles, attests no less than everlasting power and divinity to that cause. The evidence is clearly seen and is so abundant that unbelievers are left without excuse. Rain from heaven and fruitful reasons filling hearts with food and gladness are witnesses that a cause exists. The only way to evade the force of reason's demand for a cause is to deny causal relationships, a denial which makes nonsense of the universe, and explains nothing.

All the works of man are examples of causation. We see a house and we know it has a builder. The Bible tells us "every house is builded by some man" (Heb. 3:4). Though we never find the builder, yet, we know that he exists.

I look at my watch. It had an intelligent maker. He possessed power. These things are self evident. Though I never see that watch maker, yet, I know he existed and I know something about him from the product he made. In the same way, we may know that God exists and we may know something about him by seeing the things which he has made.

As we look into the sky which God has made, we find the proud monarch of the sky who shakes off the sleep of night and makes his journey through space. He operates with mathematical precision. At night with the naked eye one may see as many as six thousand stars. With the telescope one may see a million stars and suns flaming like arch-angels on the frontiers of steller space. They do not run into one another. They do not go by chance. Men may judge planetary movement of the future by that of the past. The closest star to the earth is twenty five trillion miles away. The light which left this star (alpha) five years ago is just now reaching the earth travelling all this time at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. Astronomers by present methods of calculation are able to measure a distance of 15,000 light years or 100,000,000,000,000,000 miles out into space. One astronomy teacher once said, "This shows that there is not a great God watching over one little planet called the earth". Yet, on the contrary, it shows how great God is to create and direct so many more things than men formerly supposed.

It is said that Benjamin Franklin, while in Paris, made a model planetary system showing the earth and the planets nearest it. One day an atheist friend saw it and asked, "Who made it?" "No one made it," answered Franklin. "It made itself, it just happened." "What!" cried the man, "You are joking." And so is the man who says the universe just happened," replied Franklin.

An atheist once said, "Show me your god. Let me see, hear, feel, smell, or taste him and I believe." To which a Christian replied, "Show me your brains. Let me see, hear, feel, smell or taste them and I will believe". We cannot see life. A man waves his hand and we see the effect of life, as we speak we hear only the effect of life. We do not feel life. We may feel the pulse of man but that is only the effect of life.

Life cannot be demonstrated to the senses. Yet, we know men live by the way they behave. There is life back of the action and though it cannot be demonstrated to the senses,

yet, we believe it exists. In the same way, we know the universe behaves. There is power back of the orderly arrangement, the evident design and precise operation of the universe.

If the universe exhibits design, there must be a great designer; if it shows thought, there must be a great thinker, if there are laws, they must be governed by a great lawgiver, if it operates with mathematical precision, there must be a great mathematician; if the universe gives us important chemical combinations, there must be a great chemist. Thomas A. Edison said that the universe is such an engineering feat, "that there must be a great Engineer". From those conclusions there is no escape. God exists.

Certainly plan and purpose are characteristics of our own mind, and when we find them about us in "nature", do not they indicate that the cause of the universe is capable of purposive thinking? The fact that kinds of liquids crystallize into different but regular shapes of crystals, indicates plan and purpose. The fact that when water freezes it begins to expand just before the freezing point, shows design, for were it not so, the lakes would freeze to the bottom and a real glacial period would envelop the world. The fact that cells in plants and animals divide according to plan, points to a rational cause. The working together of rain and sunlight, soil and air, in the production of the food to sustain life, is one of the most powerful proofs, of a cause who is planning, a rational person. It is probable that the specific combination of circumstances which enables life to exist on the earth is found nowhere else in the universe. If the temperature of the earth's surface were to rise only a relatively few degrees, life would be impossible. Does not this indicate design by a cause who thinks?

There is nothing in nature, there is no known fact, principle which disproves the existence of God. Atheism is without foundation. No syllogism can be formed that will prove it, no

experiment can be performed that will certify it. We are, therefore, justified in concluding that God is divine personality, a divine being and not an abstract idea or fact. There is strong resemblance in the design of nature. Man sees the great mountains with broad bases and the low center of gravity and models his pyramids and tall buildings after them. We conclude that as these things are the result of deliberate planning on man's part, the universe is a result of deliberate planning of God's part.

David was able to see the planning of God in the universe. David in Psalms 8:3-9, "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put able things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beast of the field. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea". Truly, David's faith in God was based considerably on the cosmological argument. David saw God in the universe.

Because of man's failure to heed God's evidence in creation, men today have thrown themselves into another period that we may term the dark ages for man's soul. This is one of the major causes for atheism today. Only a spiritual renaissance can alleviate this foe of Christianity. The challenge must be met and defeated before we lapse into another thousand years of darkness that will damn the souls of man for eternity.

The truth of God's existence must shine into every mind wherein is sin, superstition, ignorance, doubt, and skepticism. Let it be heralded to all men in every language, sweeping away the cobwebs and fears of life. Thus, man could have salvation and knowledge that living for God is man's only chance for hope and reason for living.

THE GREATNESS OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

1. Church history is characterized by the falling away that Paul predicted in I Timothy 4:1 which says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the later times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons".
2. The falling away began with changes in the original form of church government. Paul predicted this. Acts 20:29-30 states, "After my departure, grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them".
3. Other changes in basic Christian doctrines came about, such as the changing of Bible baptism which is immersion to sprinkling.
4. By about 606 A.D., the Roman Catholic church as we know it, came into existence.
5. Several hundred years later Martin Luther began what is commonly called the Protestant Reformation. This of course ultimately led to more denominations. It did not lead to the restoration of New Testament Christianity.
6. Not many years after Luther's Protestant reformation, men became dissatisfied with denominationalism. In particular they were unhappy with the many creeds such as the Nicene Creed, the Augsburg Confession, the Westminster Confession, and the Apostle's Creed. Men began to realize that these were not inspired statements. Jesus promised inspiration to a select group of men. To the Apostles Jesus promised, "Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth . . . (Jno. 16:13). These men resented the fact that these creeds had become a test of fellowship among the various denominations. Through a study of the Bible, they realized that

creeds were being elevated over the all authoritative word of God.

7. Calvin's doctrine of total depravity held denominationalism in its grip. It taught that babies are conceived in sin and are born in sin. It says that men are born as dead spiritually as Lazaraus was dead physically. Calvin taught that just as a miracle was used to raise Lazaraus from the dead, a miracle was needed to raise the souls of men from their spiritual death. Calvinism advocates that men cannot come to God. Everything must be done by God if the lost man is to be saved. Thus, many would go to the old mourner's bench and pray for God to send them the power. Many went through life wondering if they were God's elect. When men began to read their Bibles, they read, "save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40). In reding about Paul's conversion they observed that Paul asked, "Lord, what would thou have me to do?" They saw Jesus' answer which was, "Arise and enter into the city and there it shall be told thee what thou must do. (Acts 9:6). Cornelius' conversion taught them that men are saved when they hear and obey the gospel (Acts 11: 14). Though Cornelius had received the miraculous measure of the Spirit, there was no mourner's bench in God's plan of salvation. These God fearing souls also read Paul's statement, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12). It was not long then until they began to want to throw off the shackles of denominationalism.
8. The mystical conception of conversion caused many to go back to the Bible again. Denominationalism taught that each conversion was a special act of divine mercy. It was a better felt than told experience. People relied on dreams, visions, the ringing of bells, the appearance of angels, and the hearing of choirs. T. B. Lairimore once told of a girl who said that she dreamed that she was a chicken. She said that a chicken hawk swooped down and she got away. She related this experience to a denominational church and they voted her in. Once a man wanted to be saved. He

had no experience, so he made one up. He was voted into the church. He worshipped and was an active participant in the work of the denomination. Then his conscience began to hurt him. He then told them that it was all a lie. The church then voted him out. Think of it, he was voted in for telling a lie and voted out for telling the truth! This shows the utter folly of denominationalism. The gospel plan of salvation is not hard to understand. It is not shrouded in deep mystery. The common people heard Jesus gladly (Mk. 12:37). The Bible teaching on Christ is simple to understand (II Cor. 11:3).

9. The Bible was neglected among the various denominations. It was a dead letter. Many people did not know how to read and write. Theologians buried the Bible beneath the speculations and doctrines of men. Many of the preachers believed that the Holy Spirit would tell them what to say. Paul told Timothy to preach the word! He said nothing about speculations and human dogmas, except to condemn them (II Tim. 4:2, I Tim. 1:3, 4:1). Timothy was told to give heed to reading (I Tim. 4:13). He was of course to read the word of God. The Apostles only received their message directly from the Holy Spirit (Jno. 16:13). One of the biggest mistakes that men make today in interpreting the Bible is to take a passage that is applicable only to the Apostles and to apply it to Christians in general!
10. Sectarianism, divisions, warring among the various denominations caused many to reexamine their faith and the Bible. The bitterness and strife among the various religious groups took a heavy toll. Sectarianism has always been wrong. The word "sect" is found in the New Testament nine times. It is translated, "sect, heresy, or party". It is never used in good sense. Christianity was called a sect in Acts 28:22. It was everywhere spoken against.
11. Thus, many people argued that men needed to back beyond all the religious confusion that they had experienced. They argued that we must go back to the New Testament. We needed, they declared, to go back to the pure, simple, undenominational, and the ancient gospel of Christ.

The restoration movement was born. It is the greatest religious movement in human history! Why? Let us take a look at several reasons.

I The Restoration Movement Exalted The Bible

- A. The Bible is all and alone sufficient.
 - 1. II Tim. 3:16-17
 - 2. II Pet. 1:3
- B. In Murray County, Kentucky there was a rural congregation that was known for its Bible knowledge. When the county judge found no Bible in the courtroom he reportedly asked if there was a member of this church in the audience to kiss! This may be an exaggeration. I don't know. But I do know that the Bible is studied and is authoritative among churches of Christ.
- C. Many in the restoration movement were willing to give up all worldly gain for the sake of learning and obeying Bible truth. Paul said, "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as refuse that I might win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).
- D. The people who were caught up in this movement believed the Bible was addressed to rational people and that it could be understood. Jesus taught, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye my disciples, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free". (Jno. 8:31-32).
- E. The right to a private interpretation of the Bible was and still is a basic tenet of the restoration movement. The Noble Bereans searched the scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). They wanted to find out if Paul was telling them the truth. Men can understand the Bible by self study!
- F. The proper division of the Bible is essential for the restoration of New Testament Christianity. Timothy was told, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly

dividing the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15). One of the biggest sources of religious error is a failure to distinguish between the Old and the New Testaments! We are not under the laws of Moses anymore! (Gal. 2:21, 5:4, Heb. 7:12, 8:6, Heb. 9:15-17).

- G. The restoration movement calls for a “thus saith the Lord” in all matters pertaining to religion. Those of us who are involved in it believe that mere men are uninspired, fallible, and subject to error. The Bible though is inspired, infallible, and has no errors. It is our sole source of authority in religion (Jno. 12:48). We must call Bible things by Bible names (I Pet. 4:11).

II. The Restoration Movement Exalts Christ

- A. Jesus has all authority or power in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18). We preach that because we believe it.
- B. Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18).
- C. He is Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev. 17:14, I Tim. 6:15). Thus, he is king over his Kingdom, the church (Col. 1:13, Heb. 12:28, Mt. 16:18-19).
- D. Jesus taught in John 12:32, “And I, if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me” He was talking about his death on the cross. The cross exalted Christ and it has a certain magnetism that draws the lost to it. We too must exalt Christ by preaching his death on the cross.

III. The Restoration Movement Pleas For Christian Unity

- A. The restoration movement is the greatest movement in all of church history because it strives to bring forth unity out of the chaotic and polarized religious world.
 - 1. It emphasizes Christ’s prayer for unity (Jno. 17:20-21).
 - 2. It stresses Paul’s pleas for unity (I Cor. 1:10-12).
 - 3. It proclaims God’s plan for unity as found in Ephesians 4:3-6.
 - 4. It calls our attention to the fact that it can become a

reality. The early church gave us a wonderful example (Acts 4:32).

IV. The Restoration Movement Emphasized Human Responsibility

- A. John Calvin said that you could not be saved even if you wanted to.
- B. No student of the Bible would deny that we are saved by the grace of God.
 - 1. Eph. 2:8-9
 - 2. Titus 2:11
- C. Yet, man has a role to play in his own salvation.
 - 1. Peter said, save yourselves from this crooked generation (Acts 2:40).
 - 2. Paul asked, what shall I do Lord? (Acts 9:6).
 - 3. Paul taught that we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12).
 - 4. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him (Heb. 5:8-9).
 - 5. James said that we are to be doers of the word and hearers only, deceiving ourselves (Jas. 1:22).
- D. "Well, that would mean that we are saved by works," says someone. We are not saved by works of the law, the works of Satan, the works of the flesh, or works of merit (Gal 2:21, Jno. 8:44, Gal. 5:19-21, Titus 3:5). We are saved by the works of God! (Jno. 6:29).

V. The Restoration Seeks To Obey The Conditions Of Pardon Set Forth In The New Testament.

- A. Jesus gave us the principal steps of salvation in Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, and in Luke 24:47.
- B. We have conversion examples in the book of Acts that illustrate obedience to these principals laid down by Christ in the gospels.
 - 1. Acts 2:22-48
 - 2. Acts 8:5, 12, 13, 29-39
 - 3. Acts 9:1-18
 - 4. Acts 10:1-48

5. Acts 16:14-15, 30-34
6. Acts 18:18
7. Acts 19:1-5

VI. The Restoration Movement Seeks To Restore The New Testament Church

- A. It seeks to restore the organization of the church.
 1. Jesus is the only head on earth and in heaven (Mt. 28:18, Col. 1:18).
 2. Each local church should have Elders, who are also called Pastors, Bishops, Overseers, or Shepherds (Phil. 1:1, I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9).
 3. There should be Deacons serving under the Elders (I Tik. 3:8-13).
 4. Serving under the Elders and with the Deacons are the Evangelists and teachers. All other members should serve under the Elders (Eph. 4:11, Heb. 13:17).
- B. It seeks to restore worship that is in Spirit and in truth (Jno. 4:24). This includes:
 1. Singing without musical instruments (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16).
 2. Taking the Lord's Supper each Lord's day (Acts 20:7).
 3. Giving as we have prospered on each Lord's day (I I Cor. 16:1-2).
 4. Praying with the spirit and the understanding (I Cor. 14:15).
 5. Preaching the word of God (Acts 20:7).
- C. Restoring the church means that we restore the names, titles, or designations that describe it collectively and individually.
 1. Col. 1:13, Mt. 6:33, Eph. 5:5, Rom. 16:16, I Cor. 1:2, Heb. 12:23.
 2. Gal. 6:1, Acts 11:26, I Pet. 4:16, Acts 26:28, Rom. 1:7.

CONCLUSION

Victor Hugo once wrote, "Greater than a mighty army is an idea whose time has come. This is true of the restoration movement. It is an idea whose time has come. It is the greatest movement in religious history because it is a common sense answer to the problems that plague the religious world. God's way for man has always been a reasonable way. God has always cried out to man, come now let us reason together (Isa. 1:18). Paul reasoned with the Athenians in Acts 17:18. Christians are to prove all things (I Thess. 5:21). We are to try those who teach the gospel because there are many false prophets in the world (I Jno. 4:1).

The restoration movement is a great movement because it asks that nothing be introduced into the worship of the church that was not as old as the New Testament.

The restoration movement offers a common sense suggestion. That suggestion is that we go back to Christ, the Bible, and the ancient gospel. We must go back to the examples of conversion in Acts of the Apostles. If we will do so, then we will be added by the Lord to the one church. Following this we must practice the primitive doctrines of the church which we know are right, because they are recorded in the alone and all sufficient word of God (Acts 2:42).

LIFE IN THREE TENSES

INTRODUCTION

1. James 4:14 says, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanished away."
2. Life is something that we need to see in three tenses. Life is retrospective, introspective, and prospective.

I. The Past

- A. What is your life retrospectively? What kind of a life has yours been? Are you satisfied with your past?
 1. Did you honor your parents?
 2. Did you study in high school or college?
 3. Did you keep your marriage vows?
 4. Did you give of yourself to your children? Did you bring Jesus into their lives?
 5. Did you waste precious opportunities?
 6. Was your past filled with sin? Were you out of Christ? Were you all wrapped up in false doctrine?
- B. Paul looked back on his life. He was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. He laid waste the church of the Lord. He was the chief of sinners!
 1. Acts 7:58, 9:1.
 2. Gal. 1:13, I Tim. 1:13, 15.
- C. Paul caused the Corinthians to look at their past in I Cor. 6:9–11. They were unrighteous in their past. But now said Paul, ye are washed, ye are sanctified, now ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.
- D. Paul also reminded the Ephesians of their past in Eph. 2:1 which says, "You did he make alive, when ye were dead in your trespasses and sin, wherein ye once walked, according to the course of this world. . ." In Eph. 2:12 he wrote, "That at that time, ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
- E. The prodigal son thought about his past when he filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat. When no man gave unto him, he began to realize just how good it was at

home. (Lk. 15:16, 17)

- F. Many Christians look back and see a Christian life that is anything but Christ-like. They see a life that has been Devil dominated. Christ and his kingdom were not first in their lives. (II Cor. 8:5, Mt. 6:33) There were many times when worship was forsaken. They could have gone but allowed trivial things to stand in their way. (Heb. 10:25) There were souls they should have tried to win. There were people they wanted to talk to but did not and now they are dead. (Mt. 28:19, 20) As many children of God look back over their lives, they regret that they did not love family members, neighbors, and brethren like they should. (Rom. 13:8)

II. The Present

- A. What is your life introspectively? Is your present any different from your past? Are you happy in the here and now?

“Trust no future, however pleasant

Let the dead past bury its dead

Act—Act in the living present

Heart within and God overhead. H.W. Longfellow

- B. Have your relationships with your family changed for the better? Are you taking advantage of your opportunities? Are you living wisely and using your time properly? (Eph. 5:15, 16)

- C. Or are you wallowing in the muck and mire of sin? Remember the way of the transgressor is hard. (Prov. 13:15, 22:8, Rom. 6:23) Are you out of Christ? Are you all wrapped up in false doctrine?

1. Get out of sin. (Ezk. 18:20)

2. Get out of false doctrine. (Mt. 15:8, 9, Prov. 14:12)

3. Get into Christ. (II Cor. 5:17, Gal. 3:27)

- D. Could it be that you are still not a Christian? Why? The Biblical emphasis is on immediate obedience.

1. Ecc. 12:1, II Cor. 6:2.

2. II Thess. 1:8, I Pet. 4:17, 18, Heb. 3:15.

3. Acts 2:38, 41.

- E. Christians what about us in 1981?

1. How many assemblies have we forsaken this year? Have we allowed secondary matters like company, family, or working in the garden keep us from our divine appointments? Would we really rather be wrapped up in these

- things, knowing that we have missed an opportunity to be with Jesus? (Mt. 18:20) If we don't want to be with Jesus on earth, how will we ever convince God that we want to be with him throughout eternity?
2. When it comes to living the Christian life have we buried our talents this year? (Mt. 25) Have we put our lights under bushels? (Mt. 5:16) Have we had a form of Godliness, while denying the power thereof? (II Tim. 3:5) Do we profess to know God, yet deny him by our lack of good works? (Titus 1:16)
 3. How many souls have you taught this year? Untold billions are dying untold! Someone has observed that the Communists are sending more people to heaven than the church! They are killing countless thousands and millions of innocent souls. These little children are safe and are without sin. Could it be that Adolph Hitler and modern day abortionists are sending more to heaven than the church in this generation? May God help us!
 4. What have you personally done this year to make the church, your home, and the world a better place to live in?
 5. Have you studied your Bible this year? Have you spent much time in prayer? How many sick people have you visited this year?
- F. Paul thought about his present. In I Cor. 15:10 he said, "By the grace of God, I am what I am. . ." He reminded the Corinthians of their present status. He said that now they were washed, sanctified, and justified. (I Cor. 6:11) He told the Ephesians that they were presently fellow-citizens with the saints and with those who made up the household of God. (Eph. 2:19) Jesus emphasized the current status of the prodigal son in Lk. 15:32. His father said, this my son was dead but is alive, was lost but is found.

III. The Future

- A. What is your life prospectively? What do you expect in the future? Do you fear the future or look forward to the challenges that it will present? Are you one who believes, that though you may not know what the future holds, you know Who holds the future?
- B. We know that the future will bring death.
 1. It is appointed unto man once to die. (Heb. 9:27)

2. As in Adam all die. (I Cor. 15:22)
 "Christ has made death a narrow starlit strip,
 between the companionships of yesterday and the
 reunions of tomorrow." William J. Bryan
- C. The future will also bring the resurrection.
 1. All men will hear the voice of Jesus and come forth. (Jno. 5:28, 29)
 2. Our bodies will be incorruptible, glorious, and powerful when they are raised. (I Cor. 15:43, 44)
- D. Read the epitaph on Ben Franklin's tombstone.
 "The body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer,
 like the cover of an old book, its contents
 torn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding,
 lies here food for worms. Yet the work itself shall
 not be lost; for it will, as he believed, appear once
 more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected
 and amended by the Author."
- E. Surely these words express the hope of each of us. Our hope is founded on Christ's resurrection and the testimony of holy writ. (I Cor. 15:20)
- F. William Jennings Bryan once wrote:
 "If the Father deigns to touch with divine power
 the cold and pulseless heart of the buried acorn
 and make it burst forth from its prison walls,
 will He leave neglected in the earth, the soul of
 man made in the image of God?"
- G. Thank God we can answer no!
- H. Judgment awaits all mankind in the future. All must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that we may receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil. (II Cor. 5:10) See also Mt. 25:34, 41.
- I. Heavenly homes await the saved of all generations.
 1. Ecc. 12:5, Rev. 21:27.
 2. Jno. 14:1-3, II Cor. 5:1, 2.
 Think of stepping on shore, and finding it heaven!
 Of taking hold of a hand, and finding it God's hand,
 Of breathing new air, and finding it celestial air,
 Of feeling invigorated, and finding it immortality
 Of passing from storm and tempest to an unbroken calm,
 Of waking up, and finding it your heavenly home!

J. Hell awaits the doomed and the damned for all eternity.
What a horrible future.

1. Mt. 10:28.

2. Mk. 9:47, 48.

3. Mt. 25:41, 46.

“Here sighs, pliants, and voices of the deepest woe resounded through the starless sky. Strange languages, horrid cries, accents of grief and wrath, voices deep and hoarse, with hands clenched in despair, made a commotion which whirled forever through that air of everlasting gloom, even as sand when the whirlwinds sweep the ground.”

Alighieri Dante: *Inferno*

K. David thought about the future. He penned these famous words. “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Psm. 23:4, 6).

L. Paul thought about the future. He wrote, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is very far better.” (Phil. 1:21, 23) He also said, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me. (II Tim. 4:8).

M. John pointed to the future when he wrote, “Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, from henceforth: saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works do follow with them.” (Rev. 14:13) In Rev. 22:20 John prayed, come Lord Jesus!

CONCLUSION

I ask, are you unhappy with your past? Most of us are. Do not live in the past. (Phil. 3:13) Are you unhappy about the present? Change it by obeying the gospel of Christ. You can do that by believing in Jesus, repenting of your sins, confessing His sweet name, and by being baptized. (Jno. 8:24, Lk. 13:3, Mt. 10:32, 33, Mk. 16:16) Then live a victorious life with and for Jesus. You will not then fear the future but look forward to it with great anticipation. (Rev. 2:7, 3:5, I Thess. 4:13–18)

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. I am nobody. They won't miss me. They don't need me. Nobody likes me. After all here is a big beautiful building. It has stained glass windows, plush carpet, painted walls, a beautiful pulpit, and chandeliers. I am just a little nail holding down a shingle on the roof. I am not important. So the nail worked himself loose and fell to the ground. It began to rain and the nail was buried in the mud and began to rust. The shingle loosened and rain began to leak into the beautiful building. The water stained the pews, pulpit, walls and carpet. All because the nail felt like he was not important!
2. Are we human beings any different? We often feel unimportant. Yet, if we as Christians fail to do our part, the whole church will suffer. One person, one Christian is important!

I The Importance of One In Secular History

- A. Thomas Jefferson was elected president over John Adams because of the difference of one electoral vote.
- B. Rutherford B. Hayes was elected president over Samuel Tilden. The difference again was one electoral vote.
- C. A congressman from Indiana won his election because of one vote.
- D. One vote kept Andrew Johnson from being impeached.
- E. Indiana's Senator Ed Hannegan cast his one vote and Texas became a state in 1845. California, Oregon and Washington became states on the basis of one vote margins.
- F. One vote put an end to the French monarchy.
- G. One man by the name of Karl Marx with his theory of dialectical materialism brought communism into existence. Communism now dominates one third of the world's population.
- H. One man by the name of Anton Lavey began the Church of Satan. In ten years it has two million members.
- I. Madolyn Murray O'Hair was responsible for the 1963 Supreme Court decision to ban prayer in the public schools. She was just one woman.

II The Importance of One In Religious History

- A. One woman by the name of Eve plunged the human race into sin. Death entered into the world because of sin. (Gen 3:6, Rom.5:12)
- B. One man by the name of Noah made a great deal of difference in a wicked world. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He was a righteous man and perfect in his generation. (Gen. 6:8–9) He was a preacher of righteousness and God spared him and his family. The rest of the world was destroyed by a flood. (II Peter 2:5, Gen.6:3) It is estimated that there were twenty-five million people living in Noah's day. Yet, only he and seven members of his family were saved.
- C. Abraham was one man who made a difference. God used him to bring the Jewish nation into existence. Through this nation Christ came! Why did God select Abraham? Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. (Rom. 4:3) In hope, he believed against hope! (Rom. 4:18) He wavered not through unbelief. (Rom. 4:20) He was truly the friend of God. (Jas.2:23) This man of faith interceded for Sodom. If he could have found only ten righteous souls, Sodom would have been spared. (Gen.18)
- D. Moses time and time again kept God from destroying Israel. When Aaron got the people to worship the golden calf, Moses interceded and the Bible says, "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." (Ex 32:14) Again Moses cried out to God on behalf of his people, "Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin; if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." (Ex 32:32)
- E. Jonah is another example of the importance of one man. Jonah preached in ancient Nineveh. Jonah 3:5 was, "The people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and they put on sack cloth, from the greatest to the least of them." Jonah learned that one man and God are a majority anywhere!
- F. Elijah was only one man as he stood on Mount Carmel and challenged the eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and Asherah. Elijah learned on that day that he and God were a majority, though they were outnumbered. This one man prayed again and the heavens brought forth rain. (Jas. 5: 17–18)
- G. The worth of one soul can be seen in Mt.16:26 which

says, For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and loose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? In Jesus ' parables about the lost sheep, coin, and boy, we see the value of one soul. (Lk. 15:1–32) Once the old evangelist John R. Williams preached to one man. The man insisted that brother Williams preach. He did so and the man obeyed the gospel!

- H. The rich young ruler wanted eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the commandments. He had done this. The ruler said, what lack I yet? Jesus told him to sell his possessions and give them to the poor. Then he was to follow Jesus. He went away sorrowfully. He lacked only one thing. One thing stood between him and eternal life! (Mt.19:16–22)
- I. The one talent man's failure to use the one talent that he had caused his master to say, cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mt.25:14–30) He failed to use the one opportunity that he had and was severely punished for it.
- J. Brother Ira North used to say that at Madison they were always after one more. What difference would one more make? All the difference in the world, if that one more is one of our family members or friends!
- K. One of the best examples of the power of one is the mother of brother Rue Porter. In 1904 his mother was the only person in her community that claimed to be a New Testament Christian. After hearing a gospel preacher in another community, she invited him to come to her community and preach. She cleaned up the old school house and killed a couple of hens to feed the preacher and song leader. A few souls were converted as a result of this effort. Later E. M. Borden came to that community for a debate and others were converted. Since then thousands have been converted and at least forty men from this church have become preachers! The power of one soul dedicated to doing God's will is incredible.
- L. A black evangelist by the name of Marshall Keeble with a fourth grade education was responsible for the baptisms of fifty thousand souls!
- M. One man in Fort Worth, Texas who was a car salesman, began to invite people to church. He called them on the phone, sent out letters, and offered many personal invita-

tions. He brought twenty-seven hundred people to church with him on one day!

CONCLUSION

Let us state that we all have influence. Each one is important. In Lk.15:7 the Bible says, there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. In Lk.15:10 the scriptures say, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. These verses show us the importance of one. The fact that each of us will give individual accounts of our lives before God on judgment speaks loud and clear about the importance and the vast influence of one soul. (Rom.14:12) Someone has written:

“I am only one, but I am one
I cannot do everything,
But I can do something,
Because I can't do everything,
I will not fail to do the
Something, I can do.”

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

1. Jerusalem means, "city of peace". In the Old Testament it was known as Salem. (Gen. 14:18) Abraham worshipped here and paid tithes to Melchizedek. (Gen. 14:18–20)
2. Jerusalem was captured by Joshua. (Josh. 10)
3. David made it his capital city.
4. Jerusalem was called the city of God. (Psm. 46:4) It is called the "city of the Lord". (Isa. 60:14) The Psalmist also called it the "city of the King". (Psm. 48:2)
5. It was the home of kings like David, Solomon, and Josiah. It was also home to prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. Jerusalem was also home of the temple built originally by Solomon. Jerusalem was such a sacred city that all Jews wanted to come to it. It was there that they would be in God's presence. Many wanted to be buried in Jerusalem. It was believed that this would give them an advantage during the resurrection and judgment.
6. The prophets of old foretold the fact that the church or house of God would be built in Jerusalem or Zion.
 - A. Isa. 2:1–4, Mic. 4:1–4.
 - B. Zech. 11:1.
7. John the Baptist and Jesus foretold the coming of the kingdom. (Mt. 3:1, 4:17) Our Lord told the Apostles to tarry in Jerusalem, until they were filled with power from on high. (Lk. 24:49) Christ also said that some would not die, until they saw the kingdom of God come with power. (Mk. 9:1) The Saviour told the Apostles the power that was to come was the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8) In Acts 2:1–4 we find the Holy Spirit coming on the Apostles in baptismal measure. Thus, the kingdom of God or the church came into being on first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ. In fact Peter refers to the events that transpired on Pentecost as the beginning. (Acts 11:15)
8. Adam and Eve were created miraculously and perfect. They then multiplied by natural law. The seed of man was planted into the womb of woman and man reproduced. Ever since Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit man has been trying to get back to the innocence and purity of the garden of Eden.

In like manner, the church began on Pentecost in a miraculous way. But from that point forward, it reproduced through seed, which is the word of God planted in the hearts of men. (Lk. 8: 11, Jas. 1:18, 21, I Cor. 1:18, 21, Rom. 1:16, I Pet. 1:23) The church was perfect when it began. Yet, soon after its beginnings there was a falling away. Ever since then some men have been trying to go back to the Bible and restore the church to her ancient purity. This movement is known as the restoration movement. The church of Christ in Jerusalem was begun under the direction of Spirit-guided men. The direct operation of the Holy Spirit on these men guaranteed that the church set up on Pentecost would be correct and thus a model for all other churches. (I Thess. 2:14)

9. Let us now look at some ways in which the Jerusalem church of Christ becomes a model for all ages.

I The Jerusalem Church Is a Model in Its Terms of Entrance

- A. Peter declared, whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Act 2:21).
- B. Calling on the name of the Lord means that one repents and is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Those who do so also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38–39) In Romans 10:13 we are again told to call on the name of the Lord. Ananias told Paul, “And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord”.
- C. Three thousand souls called on the name of the Lord and the Lord added them to the church that very day. (Acts 2: 41, 47)
- D. These terms of entrance are still binding on all men today. (Jude 3)

II The Jerusalem Church Is a Model in Preaching

- A. On Pentecost Peter preached the gospel or good news about Christ. (Acts 2:22–36)
- B. In preaching the gospel, Peter preached on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. This is the gospel in a nutshell. (I Cor 15:1–4).
- C. Peter also stressed the two great facts that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah and that Jesus was Lord. In so doing, Peter acknowledged that Jesus was the Son of God.

D. In Acts 2:40 Luke wrote, "And with many other words, he testified and exhorted them saying, save yourselves from this crooked or untoward generation."

1. After Peter had made his main points, there were many other words. What were they?
2. We know that Peter "testified". This is not the same thing as the so-called testimony that goes on in denominational churches. This word means, "to utter a solemn protest".
3. Furthermore, we know that Peter "exhorted". This word means, "to admonish, urge, beseech, intreat and encourage". He urged them to play a role in their own salvation with fear and trembling. (Phil.2:12)
4. In my judgment, we need a little more testifying and exhorting at the end of gospel sermons that are supposed to be designed to save the souls of the lost. Paul told Timothy, "Preach the word, be urgent in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (II Tim.4:2)

III The Jerusalem Church Is a Model of Steadfastness

A. The word "steadfast" means "to give constant attention to, to devote oneself to, to steadfastly persevere."

1. This church gave constant attention to the Apostle's doctrine. They studied it. They applied it in their own lives. They preached it. The importance of the Apostle's doctrine can be seen in passages like Matthew 10:40, 28:18-20 and II John 9.
2. These Christians devoted themselves to the breaking of bread or the Lord's Supper. (Acts 20:7, I Cor.11:26)
3. They persevered in fellowship. John told us that our fellowship is with the Father and his Son. (I Jno.1:4) We, of course, have fellowship with each other. (I Jno.1:7) The fellowship here means an intimate relationship or partnership. (I Cor.3:11)
4. God's people maintained a steadfast prayer life. Notice that the word prayers is plural. Jesus said, men ought always to pray and not to faint. (Lk.18:1) These Christians practiced what Christ preached. See also I Thessalonians 5:17.

IV The Jerusalem Church is a Model in Reverence

- A. Acts 2:43 tells us that fear came upon every soul.
- B. After Ananias and Sapphira were disciplined by God, great fear came upon the whole church. (Acts 5:11)
- C. Peter told Cornelius that those who fear God are accepted with or by him. (Acts 10:34–35)
- D. Solomon summed man's reasons for existence up by saying, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecc 12:13).
- E. If there is something that we really lack in today's church it is genuine reverence for God and all that is holy!

V The Church of Christ in Jerusalem is a Model in Unity

- A. When Pentecost came, they were all together with one accord in one place. (Acts 2:1)
- B. And all that believed were together, and had all things common. (Acts 2:44)
- C. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul . . ." (Acts 4:32)
- D. When Peter was in prison, prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. (Acts 12:5)
- E. The Jerusalem church put into practice the principles of unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17:20–21. They are a model of Paul's sevenfold platform for unity found in Ephesians 4:3–6.

VI The Jerusalem Church Was a Model in Liberty and Benevolence

- A. All that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. (Acts 2:44–45)
- B. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the Apostle's feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as any man had need. (Acts 2:34–35)
- C. Christians are to be known for their love for each other. (Jno. 13:34–35) We are also to be concerned about the welfare of our fellowmen. (Gal. 6:10, Mt. 22:39)

VII The Jerusalem Church is a Model of Happiness and Joy

- A. They ate with one another and their hearts were filled with singleness of heart and gladness. (Acts 2:46)
- B. These Jerusalem Christians were continually praising God. This is an indication of their joy and inner peace. (Acts 2:47)
- C. Christians are to rejoice evermore. (I Thess.5:16)
- D. If there is another thing that we lack in churches of Christ today, it is simple-hearted, overflowing, heart-felt joy. We as Christians should be the happiest people in the world. Yet, some of the most miserable people I have ever known were Christians! Some of our churches are so cold that we could skate down the isles! We are so sombre and sour that I sometimes wonder if I am among Christians or a bunch of undertakers!

VIII The Jerusalem Church is a Model of Respect

- A. Those who were not Christians had a favourable impression of the people of God. (Acts 2:47)
- B. One early Christian writer commenting on the world's view of the church declared that the people exclaimed, "Behold, how they love one another!"
- C. Wouldn't it be wonderful today if we were known in our communities as the church that loves one another? In too many communities we are known for our divisions.
- D. Paul in Phil.1:27 said that our lives are to be worthy of the gospel. Do we live in such a way to bring worth, value and respect to the church and the gospel?

IX The Jerusalem Church is a Model in the Way It Handled Persecution

- A. When Peter and John were told not to teach in the name of Jesus, they replied, "For we cannot but speak the things which we both saw and heard." (Acts 4:20) They filled Jerusalem with their doctrine. (Acts 5:28) In verse 29 Luke wrote, "Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than man." Quite obviously persecution did not stop the proclamation of the good news.
- B. One of the most remarkable verses in Acts and in the whole Bible is Acts 5:41, which says, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name." Verse 42 says,

“And daily in the temple, and in every home, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus as the Christ.”

- C. Where did they get such great boldness? How could they be so fearless? Acts 4:13 says, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.” Intimate fellowship with Christ breeds boldness. Perfect love casts out fear.

X The Jerusalem Church is a Model in Problem Solving and Discipline

- A. God disciplined Ananias and Sapphira. They lied to God and the Apostles about the selling of a possession. They kept back part of the price while pretending that they were offering it all to the church. (Acts 5:1–11) This act of discipline brought great fear upon the whole church.
- B. When the problem of the neglect of the Grecian widows came up, the Apostles offered some sound advice. Seven men were selected from among the church to handle this problem, so that the Apostles could give themselves to preaching and prayer. (Acts 6:1–6)
- C. It is interesting to note the next verse. Acts 6:7 says, “And the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of priests were made obedient to the faith.”
- D. One reason why we fail to grow is our failure to discipline. This lack of needed action is a great millstone around the neck of the 20th century church. Another stumbling block is our nagging problems that continue to go unsolved. We just keep putting off dealing with these little foxes and they spoil our spiritual vines.

XI The Jerusalem Church is a Model in Organization

- A. The Jerusalem church of Christ was ruled by Elders.
1. Acts 11:30.
 2. Acts 15:6.
- B. Elders are also known as Bishops. (I Tim. 3:1) They are called Overseers. (Acts 20:28) Peter calls Elders, Shepherds. (I Pet. 5:1–4)
- C. The qualifications for Elders are found in two passages of scripture.

1. I Tim.3:1–7.
 2. Titus 1:5–9.
- D. Some have argued that the servants of Acts 6 were Deacons. This may or may not be. Deacons did serve under the local Elders in churches of Christ. (Phil.1:1) Their qualifications are found in I Timothy 3:8–13.

CONCLUSION

Let us observe that the Jerusalem church of Christ is truly the model church. Paul noted that the Thessalonians had imitated the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. (I Thess.2: 14) Surely at the top of the list of churches to be imitated was the Jerusalem church. If the modern day church wants to go forward, she must do so by going backwards. We must go back and imitate this great church. We must not be the first by whom the new is tried nor the first to lay the old aside.

THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

1. In our study of the Bible, we come in contact with two Antiochs. One is Antioch of Pisidia which is found in modern day Turkey. The Antioch we are studying is Antioch of Syria.
2. Antioch of Syria was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. It had a population of three hundred thousand.
3. It was the center of culture and commerce in the Mediterranean world.
4. The gods of the Greeks, Romans and Orient were worshipped here.
5. The Jews were here with the synagogue.
6. After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., Antioch became the center of New Testament Christianity.

I The Beginning Or Establishment of the Church of Christ In Antioch

A. Following the death of Stephen the church was scattered abroad.

1. Acts 8:1, 4.

2. Acts 11:19–20.

B. As these Christians were scattered, they preached Jesus. (Acts 8:5, 35; II Cor 4:5)

C. Notice the end results. Acts 11:21 says, “And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.” What did Luke mean by believing and turning? In Acts 3:19 Peter preached, “Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, when times of refreshing shall come from the Lord.” The turning must refer to something other than repentance which is commanded of all men. (Acts 17:30–31) Acts 2:38 teaches us that baptism is the act that follows repentance. Thus, they believed and were baptized. This is what Jesus taught. (Mark 16:16) This is what the Corinthians did. (Acts 18:8)

D. As a result of these conversions the Jerusalem church of Christ sent Barnabas. (Acts 11:22)

1. When he came he saw the grace of God. (Acts 11:23) We

- are saved by grace. (Eph.2:8–9; Titus 2:11)
2. He was glad. Gladness was a characteristic of the early Christians. (Acts 2:46, 15:3)
 3. He exhorted them with purpose of heart that they should cleave unto the Lord. Peter exhorted on Pentecost. (Acts 2:40) Paul told Timothy to exhort. (II Tim.4:2) The word exhort means, “to beg, plea, warn, admonish and encourage.” Notice that he did so with all his heart. (Col. 3:23)
 4. The results can be seen in verse twenty-four. “. . . and much people was added to the Lord.” Three thousand were added to the Lord or church on Pentecost. (Acts 2: 41, 47) In Acts 5:14 we are told that believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes of both men and women. Rather than joining the church of one’s choice, God adds the saved to the church of His choice!
 - E. Then departed Barnabas unto Tarsus, for to seek Saul. (Acts 11:25) When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. Paul and Barnabas assembled themselves with the church for a year and taught much people. (Acts 11:26)
 - F. Something very significant happened at Antioch. “. . . and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” In Acts 26:28 Agrippa said, almost thou (Paul) persuadest me to be a Christian. Peter taught us in I Peter 4:16, “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but rather let him glorify God in that name.” These disciples were not called Christians in derision. This was the new name foretold by Isaiah 62:2, which says that God will call his people by a new name.

II The Antioch Church Was A Benevolent Church

- A. Acts 11:27–30 says, “And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout the world: which shall come to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea. Which they did and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”
1. In this text we have the first mention of New Testament prophets. They were a distinct part of the church in the

age of miracles. They did not seem to be stationary. They moved about. Agabus the prophet appears again in Acts 21:10. See also Ephesians 4:11. In my judgment these prophets with miraculous insight vanished with the Apostles, when the age of miracles came to an end. (I Cor.13:8)

2. Notice that each Christian determined to give according to his own personal ability. Paul taught the responsibility of individuals to give. (I Cor. 16:1–2, II Cor.9:6) The Antioch church was no doubt impressed with the liberality of the Jerusalem church. (Acts 2:44–45, 4:34–35) Let us point out that their benevolence extended to non Christians as well as their own brethren. (Gal.6:10)
 3. Also in this we have the first mention of Elders in the New Testament. There are other passages in Acts that mention Elders. (Acts 14:23, 15:2) Their qualifications are found in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- B. We would do well to imitate the benevolent Christians in Jerusalem and Antioch. The truth of the matter is that we are engaging in token benevolent work in most local congregations! Verses like Galatians 2:10, James 1:27 and Matthew 25:34–46 are going to drop like bombs on a lot of Christians on the day of judgment!

III The Antioch Church Was An Evangelistic Church

- A. Acts 13:1–3 says, “Now there were at Antioch in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster brother of Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord the Holy Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”
- B. Brethren while the Antioch church fasted and prayed, we feast and play.
- C. This church was one of the greatest if not the greatest missionary church in all of the New Testament!
1. Paul and Barnabas went on the first missionary journey. It encompassed five cities and lasted two years.
 2. Paul and Silas went on the second missionary journey that lasted three years and encompassed four cities.

3. Paul's third missionary journey lasted four years. He evangelized in such places as Corinth and Ephesus. Some think there was a fourth one!
- D. We need more churches today that will become the home base for missionaries that are sent into the far flung corners of our world. We must evangelize or fossilize. We must reach out or pass out. We must send or end. We must engage in mission work or become a mission field.
- E. I have travelled around the world in the last few years visiting our mission fields. I have tried to contribute to them in every way I could while there. Frankly, even in our finest works, we are reaching precious few. The problems faced by those on the field are staggering. We have one full time worker for six million people. I came away stunned at the task that is before us brethren! We must do more and it must be done with the utmost urgency. The world cannot wait. Souls are passing into eternity every second and their blood is on our hands! (Ezk. 3:18–20) If you don't believe that, just wait until judgment. We must pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth reapers into his harvest. (Mt 9:38) We can all do at least this much. But I fear that this is too much for the prosperous this world oriented brethren that make up the church in the United States. No wonder some are calling this the Post Christian Era.

CONCLUSION

I think we must see the success of the Antioch church in the light of its benevolent and evangelistic spirit. May God help us to recapture it!

THE CHURCH IN ROME

INTRODUCTION

1. In no other city on earth has there been glory like the glory of Rome. She was the ruling head and the very heartbeat of the world for five hundred years.
2. Rome has been called the imperial city, the epitome of the world, the eternal city and the hub of the universe. Its population was about one and a half million people.
3. Rome was a universal power and played a major role in the great apostasy in the form of the Roman Catholic church.

I The Origin of The Church In Rome

A. Its origin is obscure.

1. Some think it was begun by the Roman centurion who witnessed the death of Jesus and proclaimed him to be the Son of God. (Mt.27:54)
2. Among those present on Pentecost were Romans. (Acts 2:5, 10) Some think that new converts went back and established the church.
3. Acts 8:4 says, "They therefore that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Thus, others think the church was established as the disciples were scattered because of persecution.
4. Another theory states that Christian merchants travelling to Rome may have begun the church there.

B. The Catholics believe that Peter established the church in Rome. Yet, the writings of Peter refute this idea.

1. Peter was only a fellow Elder on an equality with the other Elders. (I Pet.5:1)
2. Peter exhorts Elders to tend the flock of God without exercising lordship. (I Pet.5:2)
3. He appeals to Paul for confirmation of his teaching. (II Pet.3:15) He was not conscious of having superior authority.
4. Peter taught that all Christians were priests. (I Pet.2:5, 9)
5. Peter was intrusted with the gospel to the circumcision. (Gal.2:7) His work was to be among Jews then and not Gentiles like the Romans.

C. Luke in Acts shows no connection between Peter and

Rome. In Romans 16 Paul listed twenty-six names. Peter was not among them. When Paul came to Rome, he was put in prison. He wrote five letters from prison and Peter's name was not mentioned as being in Rome.

II The Character of The Roman Church

- A. It was cosmopolitan.
 - 1. Jews were in it. In Romans 7:1 Paul spoke to those who knew the law.
 - 2. Gentiles were in it. Paul was an Apostle of the Gentiles. (Rom.11:13)
 - 3. In Romans 16 Paul listed twenty-six names. They showed a variety of national origins and races. Three of them were Paul's own relatives.
- B. This church lacked a central organization. When Paul wrote the Roman letter in 58 A.D. there were no Elders or Deacons there. We know this I think because, he addressed this letter to the saints but also spoke of the Bishops and Deacons. This of course is embarrassing to the Roman Catholic church. Paul says nothing about Peter the Pope. There is no mention of Cardinals, Archbishops, of Bishops, or any other form of ecclesiastical hierarchy.
- C. There may have been as many as four congregations in the city. These groups met in various homes.
 - 1. Rom 16:5 speaks of the church in the home of Aquila and Priscilla.
 - 2. In Rom 16:11 Paul saluted Herodion his kinsman. Then he sent greetings to the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. These names are listed as members of the imperial staff of Caesar. Many had been converted. (Phil 4:22) Archaeologists have found a wine cellar in Caesar's palace where these and other Christians met.
 - 3. Rom 16:14 salutes Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes and other brethren that are with them.
 - 4. Note now also Rom 16:15 where Paul wrote, salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, Olympas and all the saints which are with them.
- D. There were some prominent women in this church.
 - 1. One third of the names mentioned in chapter 16 were women.

2. Phebe was called a servant of the church in Cenchrea. (Rom 16:1)
 3. Priscilla laid down her neck for Paul and opened her home to the church. She underwent great hazzards for the gospel. (Rom 16:4–5)
- E. This church was also steadfast in persecution.
1. No church of Christ received a baptism of blood like this one.
 2. Acts 18:2 says, that Claudius Caesar commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.
 3. In A.D. 64 Nero burned Rome. It burned for six days and seven nights. He blamed the Christians. He dipped their bodies in pitch and made torches out of them. He fed them to the beasts. Many Christians went underground in places known as the catacombs. The catacombs extend for five hundred and eighty-seven miles under Rome. Over the years they served as graves for four million Christians! Thousands of Christians met in the catacombs to worship with the stench of death in their nostrils!
 4. Their steadfastness can be seen in verses like Romans 1:8 which says, “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.” Paul encouraged them to remain steadfast in verses like Romans 8:28, 35–39, 16:20.
- F. This church had internal problems.
1. There were problems with hypocrisy. (Rom. 2:21–22, 24)
 2. There were social problems. (Rom. 3:9–11)
 3. There was a misunderstanding of grace. (Rom. 6:1)
 4. They were offending the weak. (Rom. 14:1, 15, 15:1)
 5. There was the problem of division. (Rom. 16:17–18)
- G. They were generous and evangelistic. (Rom. 15:24)

CONCLUSION

We must observe that the Roman church was a great church. Thus, we are shocked to turn the pages of history and find Rome the mother of harlots, the home of the man of sin and the son of perdition. It was the parent to apostasy and nurse of error. No greater perversion of Christianity exists than the Roman Catholic church.

THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

1. Corinth was located about forty miles west of Athens. It was truly the chief city of Greece. It had authority, wealth, literature, art, luxury and beauty.
2. These things were only surpassed by its immorality!
3. Paul wrote Romans from Corinth.
4. It had a population of 600,000 people.

I The Beginning of The Church In Corinth

- A. Paul left Athens for Corinth in A.D. 52 on his second missionary journey. (Acts 18:1)
- B. When he arrived there he found Jews by the names of Aquila and Priscilla. They had recently been expelled from Rome by Claudius. Because he and Aquila were tent makers by trade, Paul abode with them. (Acts 18:2-3).
- C. Paul immediately went to the synagogue. He reasoned there every Sabbath. He persuaded both Jews and Greeks. When Silas and Timothy arrived on the scene, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and preached that Jesus was the Christ.
- D. A close examination of verses 4 and 5 reveal four key words.
 1. "Reasoned" is a word meaning, "to think different things, to ponder, to dispute". (Isa.1:18)
 2. "Persuaded" means "to win over, to change one's mind, to influence, to reason". (II Cor.5:11)
 3. "Constrained" means, "to compel, to force". (I Cor.1 18, Rom.1:14-16)
 4. "Testified" means, "to engage in a solemn protest". (Acts 2:40)
 5. These words contain vital elements in powerful and successful preaching. I fear that they are greatly neglected today!
- E. The reaction to Paul's preaching. (Acts 18:6-7)
- F. The results. (Acts 18:8)
 1. Crispus believed with all his house. So did the Philippian jailer. (Acts 16:30-34)
 2. They heard. Faith cometh by hearing. (Rom.10:17) All men must hear the gospel. (Mk.16:15-16)

3. They believed. Those who will not believe will be damned. (Mk.16:16)
 4. They were baptized. So were all other examples of Bible conversion. (Acts 2:38, 8:35–39, 10:48, 9:18, 16:15, 33, 22:16)
 5. They were added to the church which is the one body of Christ. (I Cor.12:13, Acts 2:47)
- G. God reassured Paul. He told him that he would be with Paul. No man would harm him. Thus, Paul was to speak and hold not his peace! This is the kind of preaching needed today. We too have the same assurance that God will be with us. (Heb.13:5–6, Mt.28:19–20)

II The Kind of People That Made Up The Corinthian Church

- A. There were few mighty, noble and wise. (I Cor.1:26) See also Mk.12:37.
- B. Before their conversion they were adulterers, fornicators, effeminate, thieves, covetous and drunkards. But no more. (I Cor.6:9–11)
- C. Jesus said, they that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous to repentance but sinners. (Mt.9:12–13)

III Some Exhortations Given To the Corinthian Church

- A. They were warned not to defile the temple of God, which was the church. (I Cor.3:16–17)
- B. They were to be careful, lest they fell from grace. (I Cor. 10:12)
- C. They were warned to glorify God in all that they did. They were not to be stumbling blocks.
- D. In malice they were to be babes. In mind men. (I Cor.14:20)
- E. They were warned that God is not the author of confusion. Thus, all things were to be done decently and in order. (I Cor. 14:33, 40)
- F. They were to be steadfast and unmoveable. They were to abound in good works always. (I Cor.15:58)
- G. They were to stand fast, watch, act like men, and do all in love. (I Cor.16:13)
- H. They were not to be unequally yoked together. (II Cor.6:14)
- I. They were to live separate lives. (II Cor.6:17–18)
- J. They were to abound in the grace of giving. (II Cor.8:7)

K. They were to put their faith to the test. (II Cor.13:5)

IV The Vices of The Corinthian Church

- A. The church had internal division. (I Cor.1:10–12)
 - 1. Its cause was carnality and immaturity. (I Cor.3:1–3)
 - 2. Its cure was to speak the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (I Cor.1:10)
- B. They were striving over preachers. (I Cor.1:12–13)
 - 1. The reason again was that they were carnal. (I Cor.3:4)
 - 2. This problem could be solved if they would remember that preachers are merely ministers or servants through whom they believed. (I Cor.3:5)
- C. The church suffered with the problem of immorality. (I Cor. 5:1–2)
 - 1. They had the wrong attitude about it. (I Cor.5:2)
 - 2. The solution was to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved. (I Cor. 5:5) They were then to put away this wicked man from among themselves. (I Cor.5:13)
- D. They were taking one another to court. (I Cor.6:1)
 - 1. Why? They didn't love one another. (Rom.13:8)
 - 2. The answer to this dilemma was to allow wise members to settle their difficulties outside the courts. If this did not work, then Christians should just take the wrong. (I Cor.6:5, 7)
- E. There was indifference towards those of weak consciences. (I Cor.8:12)
 - 1. Why? They were puffed up because of their knowledge. (I Cor.8:1)
 - 2. The answer is love because it edifies or builds up. (I Cor. 8:1)
- F. There were disorders in their worship (I Cor.11:18–21, 14: 3, 12)
 - 1. This was caused by a lack of love, selfishness and pride.
 - 2. The solution to this problem can be found in two verses. I Cor. 14:33 says that God is not the author of confusion. The other verse is I Cor.14:40 which says, do all things decently and in order.
- G. Some were denying the resurrection. (I Cor.15:12–19)
 - 1. Where did this idea come from? Nobody knows.

2. The only cure is I Cor.15:20, "Now Christ hath been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep."

V The Virtues of The Corinthian Church

- A. This church was loyal to doctrinal truth. Paul praised them for holding fast to the traditions that he gave them. (I Cor. 11:2)
 1. By traditions, Paul meant the gospel that he had revealed unto them. (I Cor.15:1-4)
 2. They were praised for standing by faith. (II Cor.1:24)
- B. They took advantage of opportunities to do good.
 1. Paul bragged about them to the Macedonians. This church had been ready for a year to aid the poor. (II Cor.9:2)
 2. They truly abounded in the graces of utterance, knowledge, diligence, and in love. Paul urged them to abound also in the grace of giving. I think they did. (II Cor.8:7)

A look at the Corinthian church gives humanity hope. No matter who or what a person may have been, they can change. This is one of the wonderful things about the gospel of Christ! This church teaches us that conversion does not eliminate all problems or imperfections in the lives of Christians. This church had more than its share of major problems. But it had its good points. Because of the virtues of the Corinthian church, Paul called it the church of God! (I Cor. 1:2) He didn't give up on it or write it up in brotherhood journal. He bore with it. We can learn some great lessons from it today.

THE CHURCH IN COLOSSAE

INTRODUCTION

1. The city of Colosse was located in Phrygia. It was about one hundred miles from Ephesus.
2. Though it was small, it was important. It was known for its wool.
3. We do not know who founded the church in Colosse. Some say Paul. Others think it was Epaphras.

I The Character of This Church

- A. It was a faithful church. Paul called them faithful brethren in Christ. (Col.1:2)
- B. It was a church full of faith, love and hope. Paul had heard of their faith in God, love for the saints, and the hope that they had in their hearts. (Col.1:4–5) See also I Thess.1:3, I Cor.13:13)
- C. They were a delivered people. God delivered them out of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of his love. (Col.1:13) The kingdom is the church. (Mt.16:18–19) Their deliverance is illustrated in the conversion of those on Pentecost. (Acts 2:38, 41, 47)
- D. They were buried with Christ. In Col. 2:12 Paul wrote, “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through faith in the operation of God, who raised him from the dead.” Read Romans 6:3–6 in this connection.

II This Church Learned Great Truths Concerning Christ

- A. Christ is the image of the invisible God. He is the firstborn of every creature. (Col.1:15) Thus, he is divine. He is made of the same substance as deity. He is the firstborn in the sense that he has preeminence over all of creation. He did not have a birth in the beginning. He has always been. Christ is eternal.
- B. He made all things. (Col.1:16) See also John 1:1–3.
- C. He is before all things. That is he is eternal. In Christ all things consist. That is Christ holds this universe together! (Col.1:17)
- D. He is the beginning. That is he is the originator of all things. He is the firstborn of the dead. That is he has preeminence

over all the dead. This also means that he existed before the dead ever came into existence! Christ must then have the preeminence. He must have first place or no place in our lives! He is also head of the church. The New Testament church was never headed by Pope, Patriarch, or President! He is the only head of the church in heaven or on earth! (Col. 1:18) He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. (Rev. 17:14) He has all power and authority in heaven or on earth. (Mt. 28:18)

- E. In Col. 2:9 Paul wrote, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Christ was God in the flesh. He was the God-man. He was the man-God. He became flesh and dwelled among us. John said, we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (Jno. 1:14)

III Goals For the Colossian Church

- A. God wanted to present them holy, unblemished, and un-reprovable in his sight. (Col. 1:22)
- B. He also wants each man to be presented perfect in Christ. (Col. 1:28)
- C. The Colossians were told to do all in the name of Jesus Christ. (Col. 3:17)
- D. This church was instructed to put their whole heart in their deeds. They were to work at everything as if they were working for the Lord. (Col. 3:23)

IV Some Warnings and Admonitions

- A. In Col. 2:6-7 Paul admonished the Colossians to walk in Christ, being rooted and built up in him.
- B. In Col. 2:16-17 Paul told them that they were not to allow men to condemn them for not keeping the laws of Moses, that had been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross.
- C. This church was admonished to set its mind on things that are above and not upon the things that are on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)
- D. Above all things they were to put on a heart of love. (Col. 3:14)
- E. Peace was to rule their hearts, as members of the one body into which they had been called. (Col. 3:15)
- F. The Colossian church was to continue steadfastly in prayer. They were to pray in particular that God would open a

- door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ. (Col.4:2–3)
- G. They were admonished to walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. (Col.4:5) This is good advice for all Christians, no matter what age they live in. (Eph.5:15–16)
 - H. Their speech was to be seasoned with salt and characterized by grace. James said that if we don't control our tongue, our religion is in vain. (Jas.1:27, Col 4:6)
 - I. Paul warned them to remain grounded and steadfast. They were not to remove away from the faith of the gospel. (Col 1:23)
 - J. This church was admonished about allowing themselves to be deceived and made spoil by philosophy. They were not to follow the traditions of men or the rudiments of the world. (Mt.15:8–9, Col.2:9, 20–23)
 - K. They were warned to put to death such things as fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desire and covetousness which is idolatry. (Col.3:5) They were not only admonished to put off the old man, they were to put on certain attributes such as mercy, kindness, lowliness, longsuffering, meekness, forbearance and love. (Col.3:12–14)
 - L. These brethren were told that the word of God should dwell in them richly, so that they could teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. (Col.3:16)

CONCLUSION

From this church, we learn that Christ must be first in our lives and in the church. We learn that the Christian life is a life that should be made up of goals. It is also a life that should follow Biblical admonitions.

THE SAINTS AT PHILIPPI

INTRODUCTION

1. Philippi was a city in Macedonia. It was founded by and named for Philip of Macedon.
2. It was a Roman colony nine miles from the Aegean Sea. Its gold mines made it a wealthy city.
3. Philippi was the first European city to be evangelized. Paul preached the gospel there on his second missionary journey.

1 The Establishment of The Church of Philippi

- A. In Acts 16:9–10 Paul had a vision. In it a man from Macedonia pleaded to him to come over and help them. In response to this vision Paul came to Europe. He first entered into the city of Philippi in Macedonia, which was in Greece.
- B. The first converts were Lydia and her household. (Acts 16: 14–15)
 1. The Lord opened her heart and she heard the gospel from the lips of Paul. She was not saved by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. No miracle saved her. The gospel is and always has been God's power to save. (Rom.1: 16)
 2. She was baptized and her household.
 3. Thus, she heard the gospel, believed, and was baptized. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk.16:15–16)
 4. Some argue that household baptism includes infants. Not so. This word often referred to household servants. We do not know if Lydia was married. Infants are not lost. (Ezk. 18:20) They can not meet the conditions to become a baptismal candidate. See Mk.16:16, Acts 2: 38, 8:37.
- C. Following the conversion of Lydia, Paul cast an evil spirit out of a young woman. Men who were making her a source of gain, stirred up the people and Paul was imprisoned along with Silas.
- D. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God and the prisoners were listening. (Acts 16:

25) Suddenly an earthquake rocked the jail. The doors opened and the jailer was about to commit suicide. Paul said, do thyself no harm. The jailer fell down before Paul and Silas and asked, sirs, what must I do to be saved. And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house. Many stop at this point and argue faith only would lead to salvation. But let us go on. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. (Acts 16:30–34)

- E. No man can be saved who will not follow the example of the jailer's conversion. It followed a pattern found some ten times in Acts of the Apostles.

II Characteristics of The Philippian Church

- A. This was a liberal, benevolent and evangelistic church. They gave beyond their power to give. (II Cor. 8:3) They supported Paul as he preached the gospel after their conversion. (Phil. 4:15) They helped him for example in Thessalonica. (Phil. 4:16)
- B. This church had Bishops and Deacons. (Phil. 1:1) These Bishops are also known as Elders. (Acts 20:17, 27–28). Each New Testament church when scripturally organized will have Elders and Deacons. Their qualifications are found in I Timothy 3 and in Titus I. These Bishops or Elders were not pastors or preachers!
- C. This church had great faith in Paul. They had fellowship in his efforts to preach the gospel from the very beginning, as we have already noted. (Phil. 1:5, 4:16) They certainly did not wait until they became a large church before they got involved in world wide evangelism. Will their example condemn us?
- D. These brethren were a source of great joy to Paul. They were his joy and crown in the Lord. (Phil. 4:1)

III Paul's Exhortation To The Philippian Church

- A. They were to live lives worthy of the gospel. (Phil. 1:27)
See also Acts 2:47 and Titus. 2:10.

- B. They were exhorted to be of the same mind. (Phil.2:2) See also I Cor.1:10–12 and Acts 4:32.
- C. They were to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. (Phil.2:12) Peter told those on Pentecost to save themselves. (Acts 2:40)
- D. These Christians were to rejoice in the Lord. (Phil.4:4) Christians are to rejoice evermore. (I Thess.5:16)
- E. The brethren were to be anxious in nothing. Prayer was to be a central part of their lives. The result of following this plan of action was peace. They were to have peace that passed all understanding. (Phil.4:6–7)
- F. Their thinking was to be controlled. Their minds were to stay on things that were high and holy. (Phil 4:8)

IV Paul Taught This Church Some Great Truths

- A. Death is gain for the Christian. (Phil. 1:21) See also Psm 116:15 and Rev.14:13.
- B. At death we go to be with Christ. (Phil.1:23) See also Ecc 12:7.
- C. The real home of the Christian is in heaven. There we shall have a body like Christ. (Phil.3:21)
- D. The strength of Christ will enable us to do all things. (Phil. 4:13)
- E. God shall supply all the needs of his people. (Phil.4:19)

CONCLUSION

Let us suggest that if you want to be saved, you would do well to follow the examples of the households of Lydia and the jailer. Those who do so are expected to be benevolent and evangelistic. They must live faithful Christian lives. Then they can die and go home to be with Christ world without end.

THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA

INTRODUCTION

1. The church in Thessalonica was established on Paul's second missionary journey.
2. Thessalonica was a seaport town in Macedonia. It was a large and wealthy city.
3. Thessalonica was the name of the sister of Alexander The Great.

I The Establishment of The Thessalonian Church of Christ

- A. Acts 17:1–3 gives us the opening account of the beginning of this church.
- B. "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is the Christ."
 1. Paul reasoned with and from the scriptures. They were his authority. We cannot afford to do less in preaching the gospel.
 2. Paul preached the gospel to them. He told them of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That is the gospel. (I Cor.15:1–4)
- C. Notice the results of his preaching. Some believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. (Acts 17:4)
 1. The devout Greeks were probably proselytes. Among them may have been Aristarchus, Gaius, Jason and Secundis.
 2. We do not know who the chief women were.
 3. In Phil.4:16 we learn that the Philippian church helped Paul financially while he worked with the church in Thessalonica.

II The Character of The Thessalonian Church

- A. This was a highly motivated church.

1. They were motivated by faith, hope and love. (I Thess. 1:3)
 2. They were armed with the breastplate of faith and love. They had hope as a helmet. (I Thess. 5:8) See also I Cor. 13:13.
- B. They were imitators.
1. These brethren imitated Paul and the Lord.
 2. The churches of Judea were their models. (I Thess. 2:14)
 3. All Christians are to imitate Christ. He is our model. (I Cor. 11:1, I Pet. 2:21)
- C. The Thessalonian church set a good example. Because of their faith they were examples not only to believers in Macedonia and Achaia, but throughout the then world. (I Thess. 1:7-8)
1. Acts 19:10.
 2. Rom. 1:8.
- D. They were converted from idolatry. They turned from idols to serve the true and living God. (I Thess. 1:9, Acts 3:19) Unless, you have seen idolatry, it is difficult to imagine what it means to save those souls steeped in paganism. I have seen people bowing before Buddha and the many Hindu deities. Believe me, it makes me sick to see it. You are also overwhelmed by the fact that the biggest percentage of people now living are deeply rooted in this spiritual ignorance. The gospel is their only hope. Will we preach it to them before it is too late?
- E. This congregation was looking for the second coming of Christ. They were waiting for the Son of God, who delivers the saved from the wrath of God to come. What about us? Are we looking for the Lord to return again? Most of us live day by day and give the second coming very little thought. Are we then ready for the second coming? John in Rev. 22: 20 wrote, “. . . even so, come Lord Jesus.” Do we want to see Jesus so bad that we pray for his second coming? If the church today would work as if the Lord were coming back at any moment, we could get the job of world evangelism done in one generation!
- F. Christians in Thessalonica were growing in faith and love. Paul wrote, “. . . your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth.” What a lovely observation to make about a congregation.

Can it be said of us today? Our faith cannot grow if we are spending no time with the word of God. Many have a faith that is shrinking exceedingly. God only knows how many assemblies they have forsaken in the last year. If the dust on the Bibles of many Christians came off at the same time, there would be an eclipse of the sun! What about our love for one another. Christ said that the world would know that we were his disciples by the way that we love one another. (Jno.13:34–35) I fear that the world knows who we are by the splitting of our churches in the local community!

- G. These brethren were called by the gospel as all others are. Paul in II Thess.2:14 said, “Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The word “church” means, “the called out”. We are called out of darkness and into light. (I Pet.2:9) We are called out of the darkness of this world into the kingdom of the Son of his love. (Col.1:13)

III Some Admonitions for The Thessalonian Church

- A. They were to admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, and be longsuffering towards all. (I Thess.5:14)
- B. Rejoice evermore, said Paul. (I Thess.5:16)
- C. Pray without ceasing is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. (I Thess.5:17)
- D. They were not to quench the Spirit. (I Thess.5:19) We can quench the Spirit by failing to heed the will of God that he has revealed in the passages of Holy Writ.
- E. Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good. What sound advice! We must try the spirits whether they are of God, for there are many false prophets that have gone out into the world. (I Thess.5:21, I Jno.4:1)
- F. Abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thess.5:22) Again, what good counsel for the people of God. If we don't, the chances are that we will get involved in evil. The first Psalm teaches the progressive nature of sin. Verse one says, “Blessed is the man that WALKETH not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor STANDETH in the way of sinners, nor SITTETH in the seat of the scornful.” Here is a man who walks by evil. He stops to look. He then stands around.

Before you know it he is sitting or involved! The stories of David and Achan illustrate this idea also.

CONCLUSION

We learn from a study of this church something about the kind of preaching needed to establish other churches. If we are to be the kind of people God would have us be, we too must be motivated by faith, hope and love. We must imitate Christ. Our example is exceedingly important. We too must be waiting for the Lord to return. While waiting, we also must put into practice some of the practical advice Paul gave them for Christian living.